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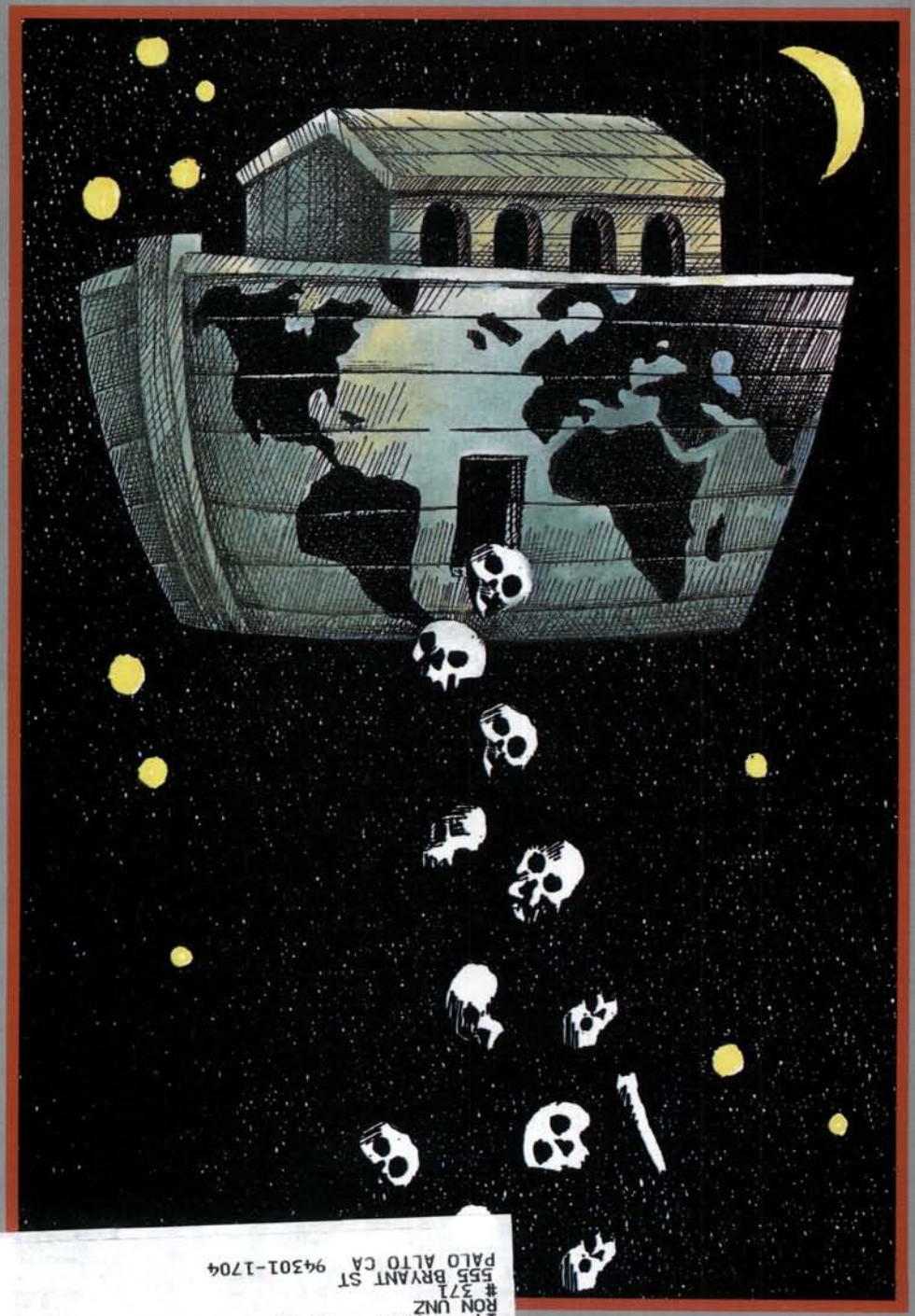

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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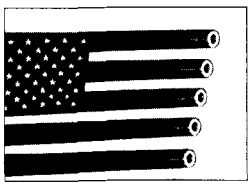

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Denny's

Llewellyn Rockwell's piece on Denny's restaurants (Cultural Revolutions, December 1994) was a first-rate statement that cut through the fog of news reporting on the controversy. Let me add a strange footnote to this craziness.

On the evening of December 30, my wife and I went to a Denny's. There we found a perfectly natural and calm interaction between black and white patrons and workers—until a group of black teenagers, who had eaten their fill, got up and left without paying. The waitress ran out into the cold night air and rightfully demanded payment. Needless to say, she was mocked for doing so and told that no one in their crowd had ordered the food, and that the person who had ordered left early. Hence they felt no compunction to pay!

Amid the *Clockwork Orange* mocking and jeering of the waitress, it seemed to have been lost on all concerned that she had to make good the invoice for these "boyz in the hood." So in this rush to victimology of which you speak, the real victim here was a working-class waitress, and the real villains were the teenage blacks.

One wonders if the final outcome of these deviant acts in the name of political correctness will be nothing less than the shutdown of a 24-hour restaurant where black and white patrons can actually enjoy each other's company.

—Irving Louis Horowitz
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CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE MURDER of Michael Westerman, age 19, of Elkton, Kentucky, allegedly by four young black males, should alarm anyone who publicly displays pride in his Southern heritage. Westerman, the father of infant twins, was gunned down as he drove with his wife between Guthrie, Kentucky, and Springfield, Tennessee, on January 14. According to Robertson County (Tennessee) Sheriff's Department detective Dave Benton, the assailants were motivated by "the fact that [Westerman's] truck had a rebel flag on it." Though the Associated Press and the local news media reported that the attack stemmed from a case of mistaken identity—Westerman's windows were tinted and the attackers thought they were shooting at a vehicle full of young white racists—it turns out that there had been an earlier confrontation at a gas station parking lot in the small town of Guthrie. Westerman reportedly tried to avoid trouble by driving away, whereupon he was followed by the black youths and shot through the heart with a .32 caliber pistol. Guthrie's leading black spokesman justified the shooting: "They didn't intend to hurt him. They just wanted to stop him about the flag."

The local print media, after sitting on the story for several days, took off and ran with it upon learning that at least three cross burnings had occurred subsequent to the murder. On January 19, the *Nashville Banner* ran a short piece headed "Burning crosses provoke FBI probe," in which Westerman's murder was glossed over in the first paragraph. To the *Banner* and the FBI, the real story was the cross burnings—not the murder.

The *Banner*'s headline on January 20 was revealing: "Youths thought targets were racists," implying that had the targets indeed been "racists," the murder would have been justified. "Black rage" has seemingly become a legitimate defense in the eyes of the liberal media. But had the alleged attackers been white and the victim black (perhaps clad in Malcolm X attire), the story would have made international headlines. Evidently, the Michael Westermans of the world do not elicit from the media the same sympathies reserved for, say, abortion doctors and black Los Angeles "motorists." Heritage groups of all stripes should demand an apology from the NAACP, SCLC, and other chronic South-bashers whose decade-long assault on all things Confederate has poisoned the minds of street thugs like

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those who confronted Michael Westerman. The mother of the alleged gunman, interviewed in her Riverdale, Illinois, home said: "The problem that brought this about was racism." She doesn't know how right she is.

While we should not condone cross burnings or other rash and violent acts to avenge Mr. Westerman's death, we would be well advised to exercise our Second Amendment right to self-protection before we go about exercising our First Amendment right to display the Confederate flag or any other Southern symbol. In the meantime, we can wait and see whether the United States Justice Department is as zealous in Guthrie, Kentucky, as it was in Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and Waco, Texas. Should the heads of the American Empire's civil rights and law enforcement establishment continue to consider cross burnings a more serious offense than murder, then we of the Confederate persuasion shall have to defend ourselves, as Donald Davidson wrote, "with the valor of [our] own arm."

—*Michael Hill*

JOHN PAUL II has finally made it. He's right up there with Adolf Hitler and The Computer. On January 2, he joined the ranks of heroes and villains honored as *Time* magazine's "Man of the Year." Oddly enough, *Time* did not go out of its way to portray the Holy Father as you would expect. Actually, it presented a rather reverent profile marred only by the obligatory curtsey to apostate liberals. Indeed, it championed the Bishop of Rome as a profoundly holy man trying to reform a profoundly sinful world.

Time called the Roman Pontiff a man of "rectitude" who has "demonstrated throughout the 16 years of his papacy [that he] needs no divisions. He is an army of one, and his empire is both as ethereal and as ubiquitous as the soul." The magazine gave John Paul II credit for derailing President Clinton's shameful population control proposal at the U.N. conference in Cairo, and it used no immoderate adjectives to describe his apostolic letter on the ordination of women. The magazine simply reported the truth. "His answer, in brief, was no. The document disappointed and outraged many Catholic women." Can't argue with that. *Time* even found space to praise the insights in his best-seller, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*.

In short, the magazine portrayed John Paul II as a "warrior" Pope, which is what historian Paul Johnson called him in a concluding, comparative profile of the Holy Father and another Man of the Year, the author of the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII.

On the down side, the profile was a bit silly. *Time* sought the opinions of other religious leaders such as the Dalai Lama and Billy Graham, who agreed the Pope was an important fellow. That's nice, but who cares what they think? If *Time* can bestow the award on its own, it can certainly produce the profile without seeking help from the Asiatic spiritual equivalent of a Navajo medicine man.

The magazine also included the obligatory profile of a Roman Catholic priest who really is not a Catholic at all, whose services are "more like a campfire sing-along" and at any given moment might feature a dance performance by children and a skull session on feminism or divorce. And the editors did not forget to include the mandatory "survey," which reported that 56 percent of Catholics do not believe the Pope is infallible when he speaks on matters of morals and that 89 percent believe "it is possible to disagree with the Pope and still be a good Catholic."

Still, the profile was positive and, left at that, would have been fine. It is the dubious distinction "Man of the Year" that rubs you the wrong way, especially if you are Roman Catholic. Dubbing Robert DeNiro "Best Actor" is one thing, but a few editors at *Time* deciding who the "Man of the Year" is bespeaks hubris of Shakespearean magnitude, especially if the "man" is the Vicar of Christ. Presumably, when the millennium arrives, *Time* will name a "Man of the Century." Will the winner be Stalin, Hitler, or John Paul II, Successor to the Throne of Peter? Ironically enough, *Time*'s photo editor found exactly the right words to describe the Holy Father, perhaps because the captivating and moving images that accompanied the article really were worth a thousand words apiece. "His pictures radiate like the man himself," she said. Of course they do.

Happily, who the Pope is, Whom he represents, and what he teaches are eternal, not ephemeral, and he transcends the banal awards of any secular institution. Question is, what's next? The Nobel Prize?

—*R. Cort Kirkwood*

MURRAY ROTHBARD, R.I.P. If a man could be judged only by the friends he has kept and the enemies he has made, Murray Rothbard was one of the best men produced by the American right. Some of Murray's friendships go back, without interruption, to the 1950's, and his collection of personal enemies constitutes a rogues' gallery of conservative turncoats and con-men. He was the declared enemy of every form of tyranny, including the tyranny of fashionable opinion, and from the beginning he was hated by the magazines and newspapers that are so many bases for the occupying army that has been imposed upon a once free people. Whenever one of the locals dares to speak out or paints a mustache on the Leader's posters, they dispatch their little band of character assassins to haul the dissident off to "the booby hatch." (What style these latter-day Goebbels have!) From a thousand miles away I can already hear the Manhattan slander machine cranking up, clearing its collective throat to muster enough saliva to spit upon a good man's grave.

Of course, it was easy for good conservatives to take issue with Rothbard's strong opinions on, for example, the Vietnam War, the Federal Reserve System, or the privatization of everything from lighthouses to armies, and Russell Kirk could never bring himself to appreciate the value of Rothbard's anarchism or the purity of his commitment to the principle of liberty. But his criticisms were ideological, not personal, and conservatives even more traditionalist than Dr. Kirk—the late M.E. Bradford, for example, and Paul Gottfried (alive and still kicking)—got to know Murray and esteemed him both as a scholar and as a friend.

Professor Rothbard was well-known for his economic history and libertarian philosophy, although to the press he was mostly cited for his polemical expressions on every subject under the sun. He read everything he could get his hands on, knew an enormous amount about a great many things, and although he moved from alliance to alliance like Eliza hopping across the ice floes, he never deviated from his central commitments: a defense of individual liberty and a lifelong war against our enemy

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the state.

My friendship with Murray Rothbard was one of the fruits of communism's collapse. I do not recall just when it happened, but some time before the demolition of the Berlin Wall or the secession of the Ukraine, it became clear to many of us that we had been had, that as conservatives we were constantly being asked to play the sucker's game of supporting liberal wars after the liberals were smart enough to get out. Our writings on these subjects attracted Rothbard's attention, and he wrote me the letter which began the correspondence which led to a series of meetings that resulted in the formation of the John Randolph Club.

I was about to write "ultimately resulted," when I realized that there is nothing ultimate, either in life or in death. Murray's legacy—his books, the memories his friends cherish, his fighting spirit—will last as long as there are Americans willing to speak truth to power. I dreamed I saw Rothbard last night, alive as you or me . . .

—Thomas Fleming

THE NOVEMBER ELECTION revealed a populist upsurge of repugnance against Washington. In the current two-party system, this upsurge could only take the form of support for the Republicans.

If the Republicans are interested in real reform, they will act as statesmen and not politicians. A statesman is one who understands and pursues the long-range best interests of his people—not one whose range of vision is limited by the next TV interview, poll results, or a brown bag of unmarked bills. If the Republicans were statesmen, the following is what they would do.

Cut taxes. As Edmund Burke said, the revenue *is* the state. It is all well and good to talk about welfare reform and cutting the paltry millions of the NEA. But nothing will be done about reforming the bloated federal government until its funds are squeezed off. They should also follow the lead of the best Republican leader, Representative Dick Armey, who is pushing for a middle-class tax cut.

Return to federalism. It may well be that the protest in many states against unfunded federal mandates is the most constructive development on the scene today, and let us hope it portends a real constitutional revolution. But the states should not only be resisting unfunded federal mandates—they should be resisting *all* federal mandates. That is what self-government is all about. True federalism is not when the federal government allows the states to do things. True federalism—as spelled out in the Constitution—is when the states forbid the federal government from doing things.

Curb illegal immigration and rethink legal immigration. It is the responsibility of Congress to look after the well-being of the American people and our posterity—not to provide jobs for the world's surplus population of Mexicans, Chinese, and Hindus. What is the point of preserving an economy and government if they are not *ours*? Republicans often act as if they thought the purpose of government was to keep the shopping malls full of warm bodies.

Eliminate the power of the federal courts to thwart majority will. As things now stand, any moral or mental cretin appointed to the federal bench 30 years ago by Lyndon Johnson can, by the stroke of a pen, overturn the democratic will and invalidate the results of any election. Until the national leadership undertakes serious, fundamental constitutional reform of the enormity of judicial usurpation, it is useless to talk of any other reforms. In fact, willingness to curtail the courts should be our measure of the seriousness of the Republican agenda during the next two years, since the black-robed deities will undoubtedly impose their will to thwart any genuine reform.

—Clyde Wilson

NEW YORK has finally elected a governor who supports the death penalty. In all likelihood, it was George Pataki's support for capital punishment, not his undistinguished political career, that secured his victory over the liberal incumbent, Mario Cuomo, who had vetoed a death penalty bill in every one of his 12 years in office. During Cuomo's tenure, the city endured a long series of appalling crimes, from the rape and beating of a jogger in Central Park, the murderous assault by a black mob on a Jewish man in Crown Heights, to Jamaican immigrant Colin Ferguson's massacre of 27 white commuters on a train bound for Long Island. It is easy to understand public demands for the death penalty, but less easy to predict whether the punishment will be codified in law.

New York has not always been soft on criminals. The state used to have a death penalty, and it executed thugs long after other states, following the example set by Delaware in 1958, did away with executions. But in 1965, under the influence of a state commission that included Professor Herbert Wechsler, a staunch opponent of capital punishment, the state ended the practice except in cases involving the murder of a police officer. Professor Wechsler contended that "death exerted no greater deterrent effect on murderers than life imprisonment."

Yet the virtual elimination of capital punishment coincided with a sharp rise in rates of violent crime. In the aftermath of Bernhard Goetz's shooting of four black thugs, the local media conducted a poll which found that no fewer than 50 percent of New Yorkers were in favor of capital punishment.

Despite police efforts to fight street crime by cleaning up high-crime areas like Times Square, and an increased police presence under the "Safe Streets, Safe City" program, the crime rate continued to rise, and the victims piled up: Utah tourist Brian Watkins; a visiting Soviet doctor; Hasidic scholar Yankel Rosenbaum; the victims of Colin Ferguson's rampage against whitey. In the ten years since the Goetz episode, the percentage of New Yorkers favoring the death penalty rose to roughly 75 percent, due to the skyrocketing crime rate and to a widespread feeling that, as Goetz had put it, law enforcement in New York was a "farce."

After two Dominican immigrants shot and killed police officer Sean McDonald last summer, when he caught them holding up a jewelry store in the Bronx, the *Daily News* conducted a poll to gauge public sentiment. Reporting the results, the *News* cited a "rising chorus of outraged New Yorkers demanding that the death penalty be restored."

Yet Cuomo was unswervingly opposed to the death penalty, and Mayor David Dinkins dismissed concern about crime with boasts that New York's murder rate is lower than that of other American cities. (Those other cities are Washington, Detroit, and East St. Louis, so Dinkins's point isn't clear.) Late in his career, Cuomo finally came to realize that his successive vetoes of

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death penalty bills amounted to a defiance of popular will, and he began to mumble about holding a referendum on capital punishment. But this was too little, too late.

Since his inauguration, Pataki has given several speeches reaffirming his commitment to capital punishment. The case of Reuben Harris, a man with a long criminal record who recently escaped from his captors and pushed an elderly woman in front of a subway train, did little to dampen public anger about crime and the justice system's laxity.

The death penalty may become law, but any bill Pataki signs is likely to be so watered down that its effect will be minimal at best. According to the *Times*, the New York Civil Liberties Union is gearing up for an all-out battle to prevent the restoration of capital punishment and is also preparing a contingency plan involving the insertion of bogus "racial justice" clauses into a death penalty bill. These stipulations will require courts to show that racial bias did not affect the outcome of trials involving black criminals.

The *Times* also reports that "some lawyers have called for *sequestered pretrial questioning of individual jurors about their views on race*." (Emphasis added.) With the definition of "racism" now encompassing a thousand different things, there are probably very few people who would qualify for jury duty under such rules. Any jury that passes muster with the interrogators will probably be comprised of devout "progressives" predisposed to acquit a black defendant.

We can expect to hear the liberal platitudes about how the death penalty is "racist" and does not really deter crime. Never mind statistics showing that states frequently experience a drop in violent crime after reimplementing capital punishment, and never mind that even in this age of race riots and "gangsta" warfare, more whites than blacks go to the electric chair.

—*Michael Washburn*

OBITER DICTA: Contributing editor Clyde Wilson's book *Carolina Cavalier: The Life and Mind of James Johnston Pettigrew* is finally available in paperback, from the University of Georgia Press. Readers who have enjoyed Mr. Wilson's essays in *Chronicles* will doubtless want to order his life of the famous Confederate leader, a book the *Southern Partisan* praised as "a singular and elegant contribution to the art of biography, the history of the war and the civilization of the South."

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Inaugural Ode

by Harold McCurdy

What was put down has risen, what was enslaved is free,
And everywhere bears witness to the world's old agony.

All tribes are internetted, and each on itself contracts,
Committed more to its mythos than to its chattering Fax.

Race against race grows sharper, creed against alien creed,
While crushed by big technology is Pascal's thinking reed.

Toward uninhabited planets the giant spacecrafts roar,
Polluting the empyrean, preparing for total war.

On earth, imperial power ascends a tottering throne,
Soot-sprinkling with debts and promises snow-white Washington.

Best here to be oracular, not too precise or clear,
To speak in tongues, in rapture, of a good morning near.

The Rock (what rock?), the River (what river?), the Tree (what tree?)
Hint at a foggy, demotic, recycled Trinity.

Whose were those muffled sandals stumbling on Mt. Sinai?
Did St. John's crystal River emit that muddy sigh?

The Tree? Was it a 'simmon from which a nigger swung?
Or the unique terebinth where the Authentic Hanged Man hung?

The orotund vague phrases drop Eskimo and Kru
Into *E Pluribus Unum*'s heady post-Christian brew.

Inebriate with diversity, no longer a huddled mass,
We swarm across Walt Whitman's savannahs of leaves of grass.

A glow along the horizon, whether from shaken L.A.
Or burning Sarajevo, forecasts a brighter day.

And so, realizing westward, or eastward perhaps, we explore
Our Mother-of-Exiles' vista beyond her golden door.

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by Samuel Francis

Gnostic Newt

The hallmark of the sophomoric mind is that it knows the sorts of things that adult minds do but has not yet figured out how to do them. Bright undergraduates who solemnly inform their professors that they plan to write term papers applying what they have read about the latest fads of pop psychology to the enduring problems of literature and history are fairly typical specimens of the breed. They know that mature scholars spend their lives trying to apply new ideas to old problems, but in their own immaturity they have not yet learned how to tell which new ideas might offer useful approaches to such problems, which ideas are worthwhile but irrelevant, and which ideas are merely foolish. Hence, the papers they eventually submit to their teachers are usually minor disasters of ingenious but misapplied erudition.

Sophomoric minds are common enough in colleges, but sometimes they never grow up. Sometimes they manage to gain Ph.D.'s and teach college, and occasionally they get themselves elected to Congress. But only once in a century or so does a perpetual sophomore become Speaker of the House of Representatives, with a majority of his own party behind him. Such an event is now upon us, and the consequences of a sophomoric mind unleashed and equipped with real political power may turn out to be a good deal more disastrous than those of silly term papers.

Most Americans and even most Republicans who knew of Newt Gingrich before last November's Republican sweep of the House and Senate probably had no idea of what for years he has thought and believed, and when in January he began to unbosom his wisdom in nationally noticed speeches, those who listened to him must have been astonished. It is well known that Mr. Gingrich is a man of no small intelligence—the brightest in the House, some say—and is eager to absorb, combine, and spew out new ideas in much the same way as the computer with which he is so fascinated. In academics and even young lawmakers, such traits are assets, but in what is supposed to be the more sober figure of Speaker of the House, they may be flaws.

It is a fair and reasonable interpretation of last year's elections that the citizens who voted for the Republicans did so because they generally wanted such mundane desiderata as lower taxes, safer neighborhoods, smaller government, more controls on immigration, and less meddling abroad. Probably not a single voter in the United States cast his ballot for a Republican (or a Democrat) because he thought it would accelerate a world-historical transformation comparable to the transition to agriculture in prehistoric times or the Industrial Revolution of the 18th century. It is just such a transformation, however, to which Mr. Gingrich is personally dedicated and to which he now seems determined to deliver the country, if not the planet.

The transformation is what Mr. Gingrich and his personal gurus like to call the "Third Wave," a term they take from the best-selling tract of pop futurism by Alvin Toffler, and no sooner had the 104th Congress convened than Mr. Gingrich himself showed up at a day-long conference with Mr. Toffler and the latter's ubiquitous wife Heidi to proclaim the arrival of the New Age. The conference, on the topic of "Virtual America," was sponsored by the Progress and Freedom Foundation, run by former Gingrich staff aide Jeff Eisenach, and in addition to the new Speaker it featured former Congressman Vin Weber and the lovely if largely brainless Arianna Huffington, who, while everyone else was palavering about the Third Wave, had some thoroughly unremarkable revelations to impart about what she calls the Fourth Instinct.

But never mind the Fourth Instinct for now. Keep your eye on the Third Wave, which, it turns out, is the epochal social, economic, and political change supposedly induced by the arrival of computers and similar postindustrial technologies. As Toffler himself described it in his 1980 book, "The Third Wave brings with it a genuinely new way of life based on diversified, renewable energy sources; on methods of production that make most factory assembly lines obsolete; on new, nonnuclear families; on a novel institution that might be called the 'electronic cottage'; and on radically changed schools and corporations of the future." Mr. Toffler always characterizes the coming age in the most breathless and dramatically utopian (not to say apocalyptic) terms—"The emergent civilization writes a new code of behavior for us. . . . The new civilization . . . will topple bureaucracies, reduce the role of the nation-state . . . [and] could . . . turn out to be the first truly humane civilization on earth."

The First Wave, you see, was the agricultural revolution of Neolithic times, and it took thousands of years for its implications to unfold. The Second Wave was the Industrial Revolution, and it took only a couple of centuries to waft us to the crest of the third one. Now, armed with laptops and lasers, we can surf into the final high-tech happyland under the mellow guidance of Mr. Gingrich himself.

Mr. Gingrich, it turns out, believes almost all of this, just as a college sophomore believes everything he reads in the *New York Times*, and he has believed it for years. In his book *Window of Opportunity*, which bears a somewhat qualified endorsement from Toffler (they disagree on abortion and school prayer) and somewhat less guarded ones from Ronald Reagan and Jack Kemp, Mr. Gingrich expatiated on just a few of the wonders of the coming era. The first one he mentioned was "a home video-computer system which would film your golf swing" and tell you how to improve it. Then there was the "personalized health chair," which would record what and how much you should eat and "allow a lot more people to stay out of nursing homes" (he said nothing in this book about orphanages). There will be "an interactive computerized income tax package," a "retirement rules and regulations package," a computer directory for federal parks and monuments, new techniques for helping the handicapped, and (perhaps Mr. Gingrich's favorite, at least next to spiffing up his golf swing), new techniques for learning and "infor-

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mation accessing." "We continue to behave as though we lived in the age of books or even in the age of orally imparted knowledge," Mr. Gingrich complained.

Speaking at the "Virtual America" conference on January 10, he made clear that his views have not changed much since the above passages were published (in 1984—no comment), except perhaps that he now sees his own role in leading the nation and perhaps the world into the Third Wave as rather larger than he did then. Taking from Toffler the idea that the world situation today is comparable to that of the 1770's and 1780's, a period Mr. Gingrich described as "the transition from the end of the medieval agrarian society to the rise of the commercial and ultimately manufacturing society," he noted the role of Adam Smith as the prophet of the industrial age, with British Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger, "surrounded by the disciples of Smith," actually implementing the political changes appropriate to the Second Wave.

The analogy is pretty clear. Just as Smith was the ideological prophet of the Second Wave and Pitt its political spearhead, so today Toffler is the prophet of the Third Wave and Mr. Gingrich is its Pitt. Mr. Gingrich, himself a Ph.D. in history from Tulane, is reported to read omnivorously the lives and careers of such titanic leaders of the past as the Duke of Wellington, Bismarck, and Franklin Roosevelt, and his speeches are larded with allusions to such figures, especially Roosevelt, whom he seems to see as a model for contemporary statecraft.

Indeed, what is transparent about the whole Third Wave paradigm, for those familiar with the thought of the late Eric Voegelin, who was perhaps the very antithesis of a sophomoric mind, is that Toffler's view of the contemporary world and Mr. Gingrich's own elaboration of that view are almost literal manifestations of what Voegelin called "gnosticism," the ancient religious and philosophical movement that for a time was a significant rival to Christianity and which Voegelin saw as the intellectual and spiritual ancestor of modern totalitarianism. Voegelin identified four main "symbols" as characterizing gnostic movements, whether the religious ones of antiquity or their messianic political descendants of modern times.

The first symbol, he wrote, is "the conception of history as a sequence of three ages, of which the third age is intelligibly the final Third Realm," the last stage of history in which the perfection of the world, society, and man is achieved through "gnosis," knowledge that usually is imparted through a kind of mystical illumination rather than rational communication. Voegelin identified the Marxist "third age" of proletarian communism and the national socialist Third Reich as the symbols of those specific gnostic movements. "The second symbol," Voegelin wrote, "is that of the leader," while the third symbol is that of the prophet, the one carrying out the heavy lifting for practical utopianism while the other works out and proclaims the theory. The fourth symbol is that of the "brotherhood of autonomous persons," which in modern gnostic movements consists of the party, the race, the proletariat, or other collectivities that are supposed to be the historic agents of secular salvation.

The Toffler-Gingrich Third Wave paradigm incorporates most of the symbols of gnosticism. The Third Wave itself is the Third Realm, while Toffler is the Prophet and Mr. Gingrich the Leader of the Realm. The "brotherhood of autonomous persons" is less apparent, but no doubt it will emerge in time as those who adhere to the paradigm and to Mr. Gingrich's unquestioned leadership of it crystallize. But, as the prophet and the leader explain the Third Wave, the new realm they aim to construct appears to be the antithesis of totalitarianism. Thus, Mr. Gingrich insisted at the "Virtual America" conference that "everywhere on the planet, we are saying that the information age means more decentralization, more market orientation, more freedom for individuals, more opportunity for choice, more capacity to be productive without controls by the state."

Of course, he is not the only one to believe so, and it is now a commonplace to think that the new technologies of computers and high-tech communication will lead to decentralization. Jude Wanniski, George Gilder, Vin Weber, and Jack Kemp, among others, are those on the "right" who are most vociferous in proclaiming this new gospel—even as transnational trade pacts and organizations gobble and centralize old nations and regions and even as new communications conglomerates absorb smaller competitors. The truth is that what Mr. Gingrich and his fellow Third Wavers think is decentralization is in fact the very opposite. The "personalized health chair" that he predicted in his book is a fairly clear example. By connecting your body and its signals to a centralized hospital or health center, you are hardly governing your own diet, health, and physical regimen. You are merely turning them over to (a) the centralized bureaucracy from which comes the information on what your weight, blood pressure, diet, temperature, exercise regimen, etc., "should" be and (b) the computer itself. What you do when you sit down in Mr. Gingrich's health chair is surrender your own body to its computerized therapies and standards and at the same time surrender your own mind to the decisions it tells you to make.

Much the same is true of all the rest of the new technology. Its whole point is to "hook you in" to networks, information bases, services, etc., that you neither control nor construct and that remain far more centralized than the books for which Mr. Gingrich seems to show so much contempt. All these gadgets and services no doubt have their value, from curing the handicapped to improving your golf game, but have no illusion that they will make you free. Computers and the rest of the new postindustrial technology offer opportunities for human enslavement undreamt of by the gnostic prophets and leaders of the past.

In claiming—quite seriously, as far as anyone can tell—that technology rather than human ideas, moral values, and social institutions will make us free, Mr. Gingrich is recapitulating an idea profoundly characteristic of gnosticism. Technology itself is the "gnosis" of this particular movement, and once we are illuminated (and thus liberated) by its glow, not only will we no longer need such Second Wave contraptions as books, but we will also be done with the whole musty structure of traditional civilization that Mr. Toffler so happily chirps into oblivion. The dehumanized vision of the future that he and Leader Gingrich share may yield a certain amount of decentralization and "opportunity" in the short run, but as the machines of the Third Wave replace social institutions and moral disciplines, make no mistake about how much freedom from the first and second waves will remain on the beach.

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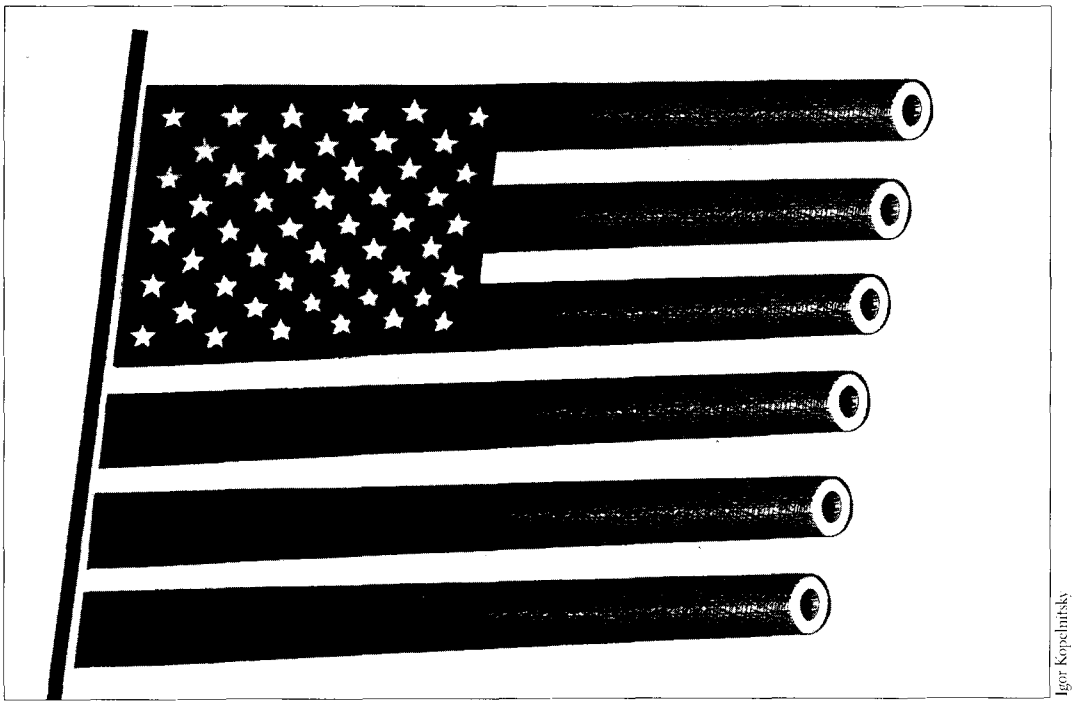

Igor Kopelnitsky

Haiti and American Empire

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

Think of all the ink spilled on foreign policy during the 80's. Yet for all of Clinton's "accomplishments" on foreign policy (Middle East "peace," NAFTA, Haiti), the subject did not even appear on the political radar screen during the 1994 elections. Frankly, voters do not care, and no fact of American political life brings a neoconservative to tears more quickly.

To understand the neoconservatives, we need to be aware of their implacable pursuit of American empire. Their military program requires keeping massive numbers of troops, ships, planes, spies, and bombs stationed around the world, ready for use at a moment's notice, as well as keeping the public hopped up to fight any foreign country labeled an enemy. It was the New Left's skeptical view of this program that led the neocons to defect to the official right, which—thanks to the Cold War—was far more hospitable to empire.

The relationship between the official right and the neocons was cozy during the late 1970's and 80's, and over time, these formerly distinguishable movements became largely indistinguishable. Both, for example, were dedicated to Reaganism, which meant a bigger welfare-warfare state in the name of limited government.

Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., president of the Ludwig von Mises Institute in Auburn, Alabama, delivered this speech at the 1994 meeting of the John Randolph Club.

For the social democrats, the end of the Cold War was a terrible moment. It meant they could no longer paint every skeptic of the military machine as a "Blame America Firster." They would have to deal with sensible critics, especially on the Old Right, who favored a more traditional defense policy. This put strains on their relations with the entire right, and on their ability to peddle a messianic foreign policy to the American public.

The neocons know, as we all do, that American public sentiment is basically isolationist. That is to say, we care more about our own country, region, state, and community than about the plight, real or alleged, of foreign peoples. The perceived threat of Soviet communism overrode this isolationist impulse, but there is nothing on the horizon—not even Kim Jong Il—that can replace it, or call forth the same level of public deference to Washington.

With the end of the Cold War, the neoconservatives split into two camps: universalist and neonationalist. The universalists argued that American foreign policy should have one principle: the promotion of social democracy through military power everywhere on the globe. Among this camp's prominent spokesmen were Greg Fossedal, Ben Wattenberg, and Josh Muravchik. For them, no place on earth should be allowed to escape the blessings of neocon rule, as imposed by the State Department, the CIA, and the Army. What if other countries did not want American-installed social democra-

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cy? That is an illegitimate question, and an illegitimate thought. To the universalist neoconservatives, only cultural xenophobes would argue that not everyone needs the welfare state, universal suffrage, an imperial executive, civil rights, and fixed elections every four years. Just as the universalists expect Americans to give up their cultural identity, so do they want foreign peoples everywhere to sacrifice the same, as they are merged into the universal nation.

The neonationalist neoconservatives—represented by such figures as Irving Kristol, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and Charles Krauthammer—agreed in principle with most of the universalists' position. But they introduced a caveat. Yes, every country can and should have social democracy, but there are times when it is not in the American "national interest" to send off the armed social workers. They even named their foreign policy journal the *National Interest*.

This view has nothing to do with the Monroe Doctrine that many on the Old Right found persuasive. That doctrine warned Europe to keep out of this hemisphere, and promised that we in turn would keep out of Europe. The neonationalists make no geographic distinctions. Indeed, Krauthammer has warned that the dread notion of "spheres of influence" is making a comeback, thanks to Clinton's defense of an invasion of Haiti on the grounds that it is in our "backyard."

To the neonationalists, having an undemocratic regime in our hemisphere is no more or less compelling a reason to intervene than if it were overseas. What then is the "national interest"? This is to be determined by the foreign policy elites under the neocons' wings and on the basis of a wide number of considerations that cannot be enumerated in advance of a declared emergency, such as a threat to the permanent sex party in the palace at Kuwait.

On one level, this internal neocon debate seems superficial. Both camps, after all, want a massive military, a giant foreign aid budget, a controlled crew of foreign policy experts, an imperial presidency, and a Congress that is too cowardly to exercise its constitutional war powers. Both sides favored the Gulf War, pleaded for intervention in Bosnia, cheered the bombing of the alleged plotters of George Bush's death, wanted to annihilate North Korea, and salivated over a second war on Iraq. And both sides want a gushing foreign aid spigot and massive spy agencies. But they do not agree on *all* wars. The neonationalists split with the universalists on Somalia, Rwanda, and Haiti, fearing that intervention in such places would discredit militarism itself.

But even the universalists should have cringed over the foray into Haiti. Here is a country where voodoo reigns, where the masses are illiterate and violent, where there is nothing resembling the rule of law, and where it makes no difference to American security whether Haiti is ruled by Aristide the voodoo priest or one of his zombies. As civilized people, we wish the people of Haiti well. As citizens and taxpayers, we say: your troubles are your own.

Our Old Right forebears felt the same in December 1914, when, as Charles Glass recounts in the *Spectator*, "The U.S. Marines were dispatched to Haiti to confiscate $500,000 in gold from the Haitian treasury and deposit it with the National City Bank of New York." After the full-scale Marine invasion of July 1915, the "National City Bank was awarded ownership of the treasury and forced Haiti to borrow $40 million at high interest." American forces then took control of the customs houses to insure that the loan was repaid, President Wilson noting that "control of the customs houses . . . constitutes the essence of this whole affair."

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, crowed to the *New York Times* in 1920: "The facts are that I wrote Haiti's [1918] constitution myself, and if I do say it, I think it is a pretty good constitution." Why? For one thing, it changed the basic law of 1804—which had forbidden foreigners from owning any part of Haiti—so American corporations could confiscate 266,000 acres of the best agricultural land under American military protection. President Eisenhower also sent the Marines to Haiti, to insure that the "pro-Western" Papa Doc Duvalier would stay in power. "Pro-Western" meant, then as now, wholly owned by the State Department.

Today, the best thing we could do for Haiti is to trade with its business classes. Instead, the United States imposed crushing sanctions, driving an already impoverished people into ruin. Clinton then promised to shoot the country into submission. Only Jimmy Carter's hard work and Christian decency prevented this, as they prevented another Korean war.

The *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, the voice of neonationalist neoconservatism, panned the idea of an invasion for weeks. As for the universalist neoconservatives, they were strangely silent. Here was their theory being tried out, and they were nowhere to be seen. Here was Fossedalism, Muravchikism, and Wattenbergism in action. Like the *Journal*'s editors, they may have feared that an invasion would discredit American foreign policy. So they left it to the *New York Times* to defend the Haitian adventure, which looked more and more like a criminal enterprise every day our troops were there.

American troops paraded all over the country, busting down the doors of private homes and businesses, confiscating privately owned guns, and then inviting mobs to loot and destroy what was left. The Pentagon kept telling us it had to disarm and jail the members of FRAPH, the attachés, the gunmen, the thugs, etc. They had to shut down radio stations and the press. They had to gag and arrest anybody who had a gun or who opposed the United States government. Sounds like what Clinton would like to do in America.

"In a worrisome incident the U.S. military still hasn't disclosed," reported the *Journal*, "the 25-man Haitian army garrison in the isolated mountain town of Belladere rebelled Thursday night. Following a confrontation between U.S. Army forces there and the Haitian commander, the Haitian troops locked themselves in barracks. After the U.S. forces demanded they come out and blew the locks off their doors, one soldier ran out of the building . . . and was [killed]. There were no U.S. casualties." The Haitian troops "*rebelled*"? So we dragged them out of hiding in their own country? And murdered a man? Somebody explain to me why this is not terrorism.

In the first speech by the communist cokehead Aristide after his installation as president by the United States, he urged the mob to grab people they thought were gunmen, or attachés, or FRAPH members, or whatever, and thereby unleashed a torrent of looting. That was only the beginning. Yet we kept hearing that the Haitian mission was a success. For whom? The United States got away with an immoral war; the mobs in Haiti got a pound of light-skinned flesh; and Haiti got a voodoo-socialist government, courtesy of the American tax-

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payers. And that courtesy has only just begun, because the foreign aid Haiti receives will quickly reach a half-billion dollars, and go up from there.

The isolationists on the paleoconservative right condemned the Haitian outrage from the beginning. Like Albert Jay Nock, they know that "Every State, from the earliest to the most modern, is a robber-State. Of its instruments for effecting robbery, the most primitive, and now most costly, are armies and navies. These are used chiefly in safeguarding the economic exploitation of weak alien peoples by the State's beneficiaries at home."

It will take years to sort out the corrupt network of interrelated interests that made this Haitian operation possible. We know the Mevs family of Port-au-Prince and Miami was involved, along with its Washington hired gun, a former roommate of Clinton's. We know that each member of the congressional Black Caucus was paid off to give the invasion the proper racial cover. We know that Mena, Arkansas, is no longer a major drug transshipment point, and that Port-au-Prince now is. Beyond that, we will have to leave it to the revisionist historians.

But what of the neonationalists? Once the American troops hit the ground in Haiti, they fell silent. Not a peep was heard from the *Journal*'s editorial page for two weeks, although plenty was said about Saddam Hussein moving a few pathetic soldiers around his own country as a protest against sanctions still starving women and children years after the tank-bulldozers finished burying Iraqi troops alive in the desert.

Iraq's movement of its pitiable "elite Republican guard" offended the Czechess Madeleine Albright, somehow our ambassador at the United Nations, and the Ukrainian John Shalikashvili, somehow chairman of the joint chiefs, so the editors at the *Journal* started flashing their little pocket knives. Of course, neocons of every stripe were relieved when Clinton proved himself willing to go to war on behalf of an arbitrary line in the desert sand drawn by British imperialists. Monday of the next week rolled around, and the other shoe dropped. At the top of the *Journal* editorial page was a flattering pencil sketch of "Father" Aristide, minus his thousand-mile stare. There was "widespread skepticism about Mr. Clinton's adventure," the *Journal* wrote, "which we ourselves expressed before the troops started to move. Yet we find it hard to root against the success of U.S. arms. . . . The people of Haiti have known nothing but repression, it's true, [so] giving them a chance at a piece of the modern world can only be a good thing. . . . We would also reserve the hope that when some future President intervenes for reasons that include Realpolitik, [there will be no] scoffing about world policemen."

A "piece of the modern world"? What is that, the chance to go on welfare so long as you obey the central state? Is the world not "modern" enough as it is? In fact, the *Journal* has the future wars it wants fought, and so decided that it cannot oppose other military adventures for fear that it might help Americans think for themselves, and therefore endanger the entire empire.

There is a lesson here. At the domestic level, consistent and principled opposition to the central state and all its domestic works is the most moral and effective stance we can take for reviving our rights and liberties. It is no different on foreign policy. We must be consistent isolationists, and oppose every military adventure—a priori—of this or any other administration. There is no need to palaver over whether an intervention is or is not in our national interest. War sustains the Leviathan, and so is against the American people's interest. So is every Roosevelt dime of foreign aid, every CIA killer-spook, and every international managed-trade racket like NAFTA and GATT.

In this effort, the Republican agenda is worthless, since it does not confront the state's war-making power. This means we must also oppose Newt Gingrich's call for vast increases in military spending. Republicans, however, were not always worthless. Warren G. Harding, the best President of this century, promised: "If I am elected, I will not empower any assistant secretary of the navy to draft a constitution for helpless neighbors and jam it down their throats at the point of bayonets borne by United States Marines."

This is our tradition. Let the social democrats call us isolationists. It is a name we should bear proudly, for it represents the only moral foreign policy.

Impression

by Andrew Lansdown

This could be Egypt, they could be gods:
three white ibises standing on a sand bar.
One preens its plumes, another peers
along the river, while the third steps
to the shallows to probe among the lilies.
This is not the Nile. There are no gods
but God. Yet how striking the impression:
this could be Egypt, they could be gods!

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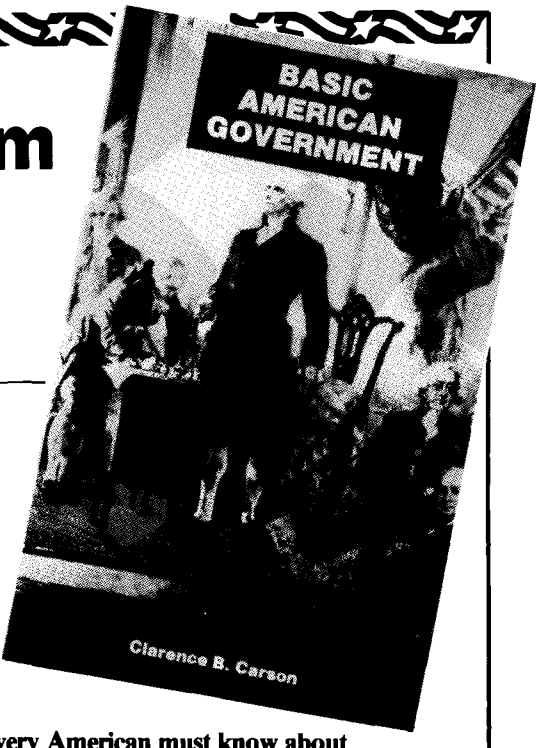

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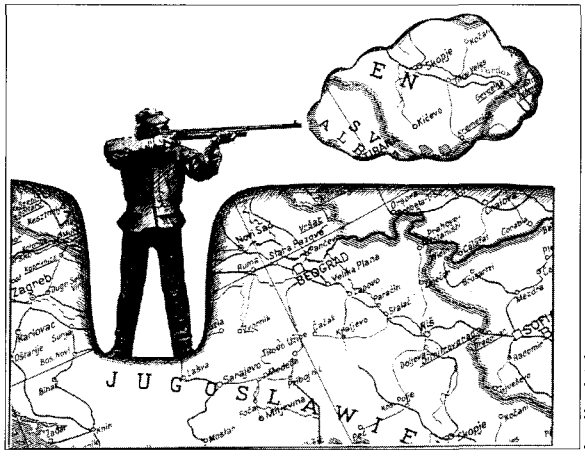
The Future of Kosovo

by Alex N. Dragnich



Igor Kopelnitsky

The fate of Kosovo, Serbia's troubled province, has in recent years received a good deal of attention in the world press, usually in connection with the actions of Serbia's president, Slobodan Milošević. A somewhat obscure communist until he became head of the Serbian Communist Party in 1986, Milošević went to Kosovo in April 1987 to assess personally the charges of the persecution of Serbs by the Kosovo Albanians, at which time he uttered the words heard round the world—"No one will ever beat you again." Although spoken in a limited context, those words were frequently interpreted in the West as signifying the ascent of rampant Serbian nationalism.

The cradle of the Serbian nation and the site of its historic Christian monuments, Kosovo at the time of its capture by the Ottoman Turks in 1389 was ethnically almost entirely Serbian. At the time of its liberation in the Balkan wars of 1912, however, Kosovo's population was nearly 40 percent Albanian. By the end of World War II, it was close to 50 percent, by 1987 it was between 75 and 80, and at present it is around 90 percent.

With the inauguration of communist rule at the end of World War II, Kosovo was made an autonomous province within the republic of Serbia and was governed by the Kosovo Communist Party, part and parcel of the Yugoslav Communist Party. Although Milošević must have had at least a general awareness of what had transpired in Kosovo during the years of dictator Tito's rule as well as after his death in 1980, it is not clear what prompted him to go to Kosovo. Be that as it may, the critical question is: Why did Milošević, a disciplined communist who was nurtured in Tito's party, and who followed other Serbian communists in being a ruthless critic of Serbian nationalism, decide to change Communist Party policy with respect to Kosovo? This question cannot be answered without first reviewing that policy and its consequences in Kosovo. And we should note that two years elapsed between his visit and his action to change the constitutional status of Kosovo.

When word got out that Milošević was coming to Kosovo, over 15,000 resident Serbs came to meet him, but only some 300 preselected ones could be accommodated because of the size of the building where the meeting was to be held. Many more were determined to get in but were forced back; some were beaten by the police, which resulted in considerable commotion. At one point, Milošević asked what the disturbance was about, and when informed, he ordered that more people be let in. And when told about the beatings, he delivered his now well-known words.

The meeting lasted 13 hours and 78 people spoke. The vast majority, apart from decrying their persecution by the Albanians, openly attacked the communist regime. Reports on the meeting were printed in the party press in Belgrade. A few sentences will suffice to give a taste of the proceedings:

Serbian man: "I know why Germany was divided after the war, but why was Serbia divided?"
Serbian man: ". . . heads will roll, because it is impossible to endure and to permit the beating of our children and women."
Serbian man: "Serbs want to live together with the Albanians . . . but here counterrevolution is being financed by the federation."
Serbian woman: "Either there will be some order in Kosovo, or by God we will take up arms again if need be."
Serbian woman: "Since the establishment of Pristina University there has been a process of ethnic epuration of Kosovo and the process of cultural purity."
Serbian man: "How is it that Yugoslavia protests one-language signs in Austria but agrees to them in Kosovo?"
Serbian man: "How is it that according to the 1974 constitution Serbo-Croatian is also an official lan-

Alex N. Dragnich is a retired professor of political science who has written widely on Yugoslav history and politics. His most recent book is Serbs and Croats: The Struggle in Yugoslavia.

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guage in Kosovo, while in the constitution of the province it is not obligatory?"

Another man asked about the erection of a monument to the Albanian Prizren League, which he characterized as a fascist organization that sought to tear Yugoslavia apart. He also asked why the program of the Albanian nationalist group, Balli Combetar, was being carried out in Kosovo. Others condemned Serbian communists in Kosovo who "served with the Albanians" in putting their personal interests ahead of the national interest. The complaints that Milošević heard were more personal and specific than what he may have heard while sitting in Belgrade, but they certainly could not have come as a surprise. He must have been aware of past efforts by other Yugoslav leaders to deal with the Kosovo problem.

During his struggle to seize power during World War II, the communist leader of the guerrilla movement, Josip Broz Tito, promised the Kosovo Albanians much in return for their assistance. The Albanians insist that he promised them the right of self-determination, including the right to be annexed to Albania, but Tito and his comrades denied that claim. In any case, in 1946 he made the Kosovo-Metohija area (now simply Kosovo) an autonomous province within the republic of Serbia. That autonomy was considerably augmented in 1963, 1969, and especially in 1974. Tito and his communist comrades proceeded on the assumption, erroneous as it turned out, that if given broad autonomy—perhaps more extensive than that granted to a minority in any other European state—the Kosovo Albanians would be loyal citizens of Yugoslavia.

Following the adoption of Yugoslavia's 1974 constitution, the Kosovo Albanians became, in effect, a law unto themselves. It is as if part of an American state, say New York City, gained such power that it could ignore New York state authorities, which could not intervene to stop the city from violating the state's laws and constitution or change any laws affecting the city without its consent.

Why, it might be asked, did the Serbs object to such power for Kosovo? For the same reason that a comparable situation would not be acceptable to the state of New York. More precisely, the Kosovo Albanians abused their enlarged autonomy to force the Serbian minority to leave Kosovo. Their attempt at "ethnic cleansing" was initially made easier by Tito's explicit order forbidding the return of Serbs who had fled the area during World War II to escape Albanian and Bulgarian persecution. Moreover, Tito, who had promised the Kosovo Albanians much in the hope that they would help him seize power, wittingly or unwittingly encouraged large-scale immigration from Albania as a way of changing the ethnic composition of Kosovo.

The Kosovo Albanian persecution of Serbs included the desecration of historic Orthodox Christian monasteries, churches, and cemeteries; the burning of barns and haystacks; the theft or mutilation of cattle and other livestock; the destruction of Serbian houses; pressure to force Serbs into selling their properties; as well as rape and other physical assaults. Prior to Tito's death in 1980, there was no public mention of these actions. There were unpublicized protests, locally as well as to high Communist Party circles, which were to no avail. Even the official protest to Tito by the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1969 brought only a statement declaring that he had ordered governmental authorities to apply the law. Following the demonstrations in 1981 by the Kosovo Albanians, demanding the status of a separate republic—which they had in all but name—and even the right to be annexed to Albania, the problem reached high party authorities more than once. And this was several years before Milošević came on the scene.

For example, the Bar Association of Serbia, in letters to the presidents of the Serbian and Yugoslav parliaments on July 3, 1985, called attention to the violation of the constitution and the laws in Kosovo. (Texts of letters and replies and speeches referred to herein can be found in the autobiography of Veljko Guberina, onetime president of the Serbian Bar Association.) The letter to the president of the Serbian parliament, Dušan Čkrebić, demanded answers to nine specific questions, including: "How many families who were forced to sell their properties under duress have returned to their land?" "What has happened to the lost court papers and was anyone held responsible?" The letter concluded with the statement that "only one nullification of an agreement made under duress to purchase property and the return of that family to their land would contribute more than all the appeals and assurances concerning the settlement of the situation in Kosovo."

Čkrebić answered on July 29, claiming that a lot was being done but admitting that it was not enough. He added that "of special concern was the failure to achieve constitutional principles concerning the equality of nations and nationalities" whose consequences have led to Serbs leaving Kosovo, which he said was "the most difficult problem." He also said that the activities of Albanian irredentists and other enemies in Kosovo cannot be neutralized by governmental agencies alone. It is necessary, he argued, "to create a broad front of working people and citizens, belonging to all nations and nationalities against irredentist forces."

The letter to Miodrag Trifunović, president of the Federal Council of the parliament of Yugoslavia, complained that serious crimes were being treated as misdemeanors in Kosovo, that not one sale of property under duress had been nullified, and that the emigration of Serbs and Montenegrins continued. Trifunović's answer on July 18 cited specific acts of parliament ordering governmental authorities to deal with abuses. He admitted that some of these were not carried out and said parliament was asking the Constitutional Court to concern itself with these matters. He added that parliament would look into the execution of decisions by the Federal Council concerning the emigration of Serbs under pressure.

On July 6, 1985, a letter on behalf of the League of Republic and Province bar associations was sent to the president of the Federal Council of the Yugoslav parliament. Letters of similar content were sent to all other federal bodies. The letters spoke of violations of constitutional and legal rights, specifically of non-Albanian citizens, failure to nullify real estate sales that had been made under duress, the damaging of cultural-historical monuments and cemeteries, and policies that forced Serbs, Turks, Gypsies, and others to leave Kosovo.

The president of the Serbian Bar Association, Veljko Guberina, said in speeches in Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia in 1988 that the violations of the rights of Serbs in Kosovo reminded him of the "dark days of the occupation when fascism ruled over the expanse of our country." In one speech he concluded, "Emigration continues and oppression has increased, as if the enemies of this country desired to demon-

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strate that they are afraid of no one and that they are stronger than the regular governmental authorities, or to show publicly that those authorities are with them." The lawless seemed to be protected by "persons in the presidency of the Communist Party."

Guberina quoted from remarks by onetime minister of defense and close ally of Tito, General Nikola Ljubičić, to a joint meeting of the presidency of Serbia and the Party Central Committee of Serbia (September 5, 1988): "Some things which are happening are so drastic that I simply ask myself how can we tolerate that in a legal state." Ljubičić then proceeded to tell (with name of place and family) of an Albanian who moved into a Serbian house and moved the old lady out. When the son went to settle the matter, he found her sitting on a stump outside. He had to resort to legal action over a period of two to three years, and he won. But when an officer came to carry out the court order, the Albanian said that he had a machine gun and warned: "Whoever approaches will be mowed down!" The militiaman had to return with his task unaccomplished. "What kind of state are we?" asked Ljubičić.

In another speech, Guberina said that Serbia's crippled constitution does not permit Serbia to exercise its governmental authority on the territory of the provinces, and that federal bodies which have that authority are quiet, while open enemies of Yugoslavia escalate their evil deeds. It is clear, he said, that "the Serbian people has again found itself in a situation, as in 1941, to be or not to be!"

Concern about developments in Kosovo was also on the agenda of the Yugoslav Communist Party leadership, at a time when all Yugoslav ethnic groups were represented and before Slobodan Milošević became the principal actor. In June 1987, for example, the Central Committee and the Presidency of the Party (officially the League of Yugoslav Communists) took the position that "the most difficult part of the problem of Kosovo and the whole of Yugoslav society is to be found in that the policy of the [League] is not being implemented." Moreover, "the pressure on the Serbs and Montenegrins must be stopped with all the means of our socialist self-management system." (Belgrade newspaper *Politika*, June 11, 1987.)

A month earlier, at an "ideological" plenum of the Central Committee, one member, Dušan Dragosavac, asserted: "If we cannot quickly overcome genocide . . . then I see as the only way out an urgent convoking of an extraordinary Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists and the calling of free elections with multiple candidates, so that men can come to the top who can bring an end to genocide." (Communist Party organ *Borba*, May 23, 1987.)

Some Yugoslav newspapers openly used the term "genocide" as early as May 1987, along with expressions of surprise that six years after the 1981 Kosovo Albanian demonstrations, there still had not been a single resignation in Kosovo or at the top in Yugoslavia that might suggest a feeling of responsibility. Instead, the authorities "continue with the same announcements in which they avoid naming criminals."

It was clear that the situation, instead of improving, was becoming worse. In the summer of 1987, a scandal—some referred to it as "administrative genocide"—came to light when Serbian Orthodox Church authorities in Peć discovered at the local cadastral office that many of their churches had legally disappeared. Someone had simply listed them as mosques. The ancient Serbian Patriarchate at Peć was listed as an ordinary "religious object." One church had been transformed into a cemetery. The pearl of medieval Serbian culture, the monastery Gračanica, was listed as general public property. The equally well-known 650-year-old Dečani monastery was listed as an "ordinary building." In some areas, Serbian Orthodox churches had become pasture lands; in others, property of the state forestry enterprise. As might be expected, these actions against Serbian history and culture evoked bitterness among the Serbs, particularly when no individual culprits were named.

Ironically, the Kosovo Serbs could not appeal to the minority rights provisions of Tito's 1974 constitution. By definition, all ethnic groups that had their own republics were classified as nations, while others were categorized as nationalities, meaning minorities. Hence, Albanians, Hungarians, and other minorities could call upon the minority rights provisions of the constitution, but those provisions could not be invoked to protect the rights of Serbs, Croats, and others who might be living in republics other than their own.

In the spring of 1989, two years after his 1987 visit to Kosovo, Slobodan Milošević tackled the Kosovo problem. He did so by engineering an amendment to the Serbian constitution, limiting Kosovo's autonomy. The police, the courts, and defense came under direct Serbian control. Though in all other spheres local autonomy was not curtailed, the Kosovo Albanians insisted nevertheless that "their autonomy" had been taken away, and they promptly refused to participate in any governmental activities. They refused to operate schools or health facilities and established their own schools and clinics in private homes. And they went on strike in government-operated economic enterprises. Their refusal to cooperate in any way led the Serbian government to establish a strong police and military presence. This in turn enabled the Kosovo Albanians to push their claim that they were forced to live under dictatorial rule. This was also the position taken by foreign supporters of the Albanians, such as United States Senator Robert Dole. The result has been a stalemate, one example of which was the issuing of diplomas stamped "Republic of Kosovo" or the "Independent Republic of Kosovo," which Serbian authorities refuse to recognize.

Some of Milošević's critics have accused him of Great Serbian nationalism, and cite the so-called Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences as his political platform, arguing that Kosovo was merely a pretext. They seem to have overlooked the fact—if they ever knew it—that Milošević, along with other Serbian communists, criticized the memorandum. This is not the place for a detailed examination of the document, but a few things need to be said about it. In the first place, it was a draft of an internal academy document that was never circulated publicly. The draft somehow fell into the hands of the communist newspaper *Borba*, which did not publish the text but attacked it as a Serbian nationalist document. Second, its main authors, Antonije Isaković and Dobrica Ćosić, had such a solid party past that they could not be put in the camp of counterrevolutionaries or enemies of Yugoslavia. Third, the authors asserted that Yugoslavia could not come out of the critical crisis in which it found itself without fundamental changes in the economic and political systems.

The memorandum analyzed the many shortcomings of the economic system (e.g., ruinous competition among and between the republics, unprofitable enterprises, waste and general inefficiency). It also pointed to the unworkability and

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paralysis of the political system, which required unanimity among the republics on virtually all questions. The authors saw that under the system Tito bequeathed to his heirs, Serbia had fallen behind in many ways. They also realized that the 1974 constitution effectively denied Serbia the power to do anything about the advantages that had been conferred on other republics. It was obvious to them that the two most advanced republics, Slovenia and Croatia, would not agree to any changes that would adversely affect them. Consequently, the authors argued in favor of democratization of the political system. It was understandable, therefore, that Milošević's critics could, after the fact, point to things in the memorandum that seemed to have guided him, ignoring the fact that he had joined the party press in condemning the memorandum.

Milošević's critics in Slovenia and Croatia avowed that his assertion of control in Kosovo signaled that Serbia was out to dominate Yugoslavia. His critics in the West have attempted to explain the secessions of Slovenia and Croatia on the grounds that they did not want to live in a Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. This constitutes a grave failure to understand Titoist Yugoslavia, because at no time prior to the secessions could it be said that Yugoslavia was Serb-dominated. In fact, the most that can be said is that the Slovenes and Croats feared that at some time in the future Yugoslavia might be dominated by Serbs.

While many Slovenes and Croats saw Milošević's assertion of control as an internal Serbian matter, their communist leaders, fully aware that Serbia would seek the redress of other grievances, viewed it as the beginning of a process that would be detrimental to the achievements of their republics. Therefore, proceeding on the well-known principle that the best defense is a good offense, they charged that Serbia's action in Kosovo was proof that Serbia wanted to control Yugoslavia. They did not even want to hear Serb arguments in defense of their action in Kosovo. For example, when a group of Serbs living in Slovenia attempted a peaceful demonstration, Slovene authorities used force to disband it.

While the international community's concern about Kosovo is understandable, failure to grasp the essence of the issues can lead to disastrous policies. The media have not helped. Commentators often speak of historical animosities. Historical perspective requires a reminder: prior to the Ottoman conquest of Kosovo, relations between Serbs and Albanians were good. That was when most of the Albanians were Christians. It was only after they became Turkish surrogates, and especially when large numbers of them accepted Islam, that hostilities developed. This was mainly in the 18th century, but large-scale persecutions of Serbs came in the 19th century. These persecutions are well documented in the reports of British, French, and Russian consuls who were stationed in the Kosovo area. After Kosovo was liberated by the Serbs in the Balkan wars (1912), Serbian policy was clearly stated: there would be no retribution against Kosovo Albanians for past actions. And the most that can be said about the policies of interwar Yugoslavia is that Kosovo was treated with benign neglect, which was more detrimental to its Serb inhabitants than to the Albanian ones.

It seems to me that Milošević was transformed not by a desire to establish or solidify a dictatorship—even if that could have been a motive—but by the compelling nature of events. As pointed out above, he was slow in taking up the cause of the Kosovo Serbs. Although he presumably recognized the seriousness of their plight after his visit to Kosovo in April 1987, he waited a full two years before taking concrete steps to change the situation. One thing is absolutely clear: prior to his action, Yugoslav communist authorities had utterly failed to solve the Kosovo problem.

Some columnists, in their blazing hatred for Milošević, have proclaimed in shrill tones that, as an extreme nationalist, he is the main threat to peace and security in the Balkans. An apt response might be to say of nationalists what Aldous Huxley once said of propagandists: "A propagandist canalizes an already existing stream; in a land where there is no water he digs in vain." One does not have to be a defender of Milošević to observe that he does not function in a vacuum.

When in 1981 I asked Milovan Djilas, onetime Tito comrade and at that time Yugoslavia's best-known dissident, what the solution was to the Kosovo question, he said: "There is no solution." Just a few months prior to our conversation the Kosovo Albanians had staged demonstrations demanding the status of a republic and even the right to be annexed to Albania. From that year until Milošević took action in 1989, the government of Yugoslavia (not that of Serbia) had tried unsuccessfully to deal with the Kosovo problem.

Since Milošević's action, the attitude of the two sides can best be summarized in one sentence: the Serbian government has said that it is willing to discuss any and all questions with the Kosovo Albanians except secession, while the latter has said that it wants to discuss nothing short of secession. This would suggest an unqualified deadlock. However, two possible solutions have been advanced. One is a partition of Kosovo, letting one part join Albania. The Serbs would want to retain as many of their historic religious monuments as possible, as well as the mining complex of Trepče. By and large, this solution would not be acceptable to most Serbs, who look upon Kosovo as a holy place. But some Serbian intellectuals, including a former president of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Ćosić, support the idea. Albanian hard-liners would accept such an outcome only if they could get most of the territory. The one aspect of this proposal that would have some appeal in Serbia is an agreement that all Albanians on the Serbian side of the boundary line would have to leave. The principal reason why this would be popular with many Serbs is that the large number of Albanians who have settled in Serbia proper, well beyond Kosovo, are seen as a critical future problem, especially given the Albanians' extraordinarily high birthrate. Moving them as part of a settlement would be far easier now than later.

The second suggestion is for the Kosovo Albanians to accept autonomy without the attributes of statehood. The Serbs have indicated that is what they wanted all along. To the Albanian hard-liners, this would constitute capitulation. Recently, however, there has been some movement in this direction among the more moderate elements. At least two former Kosovo Albanian leaders have spoken out in favor of participating in elections and working in other ways toward viable arrangements that would let Kosovo Albanians manage their own affairs while remaining loyal citizens of the country in which they live. The second alternative seems to hold the best prospect for a peaceful resolution of this critical problem.

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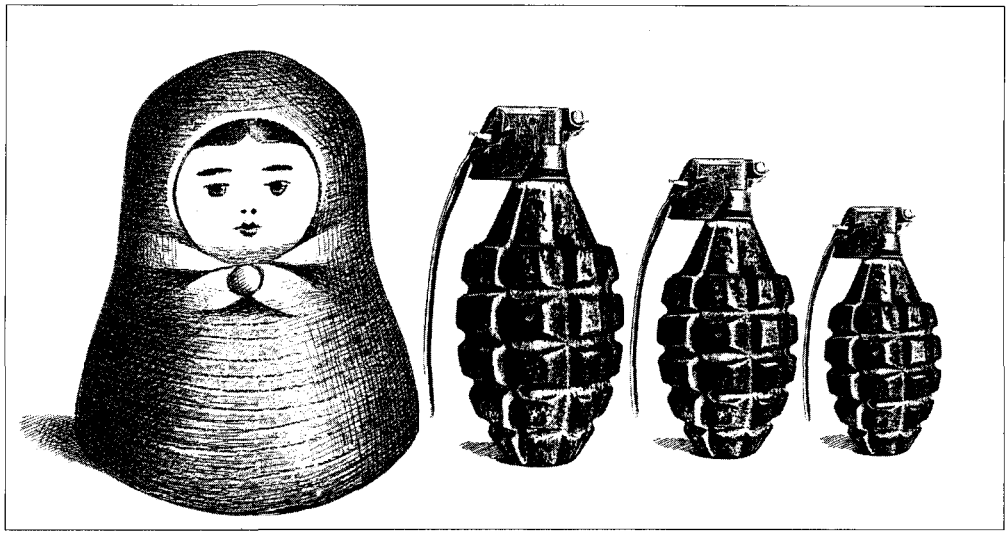
Eyes on the Prize of Central Asia

by Wallace Kaufman



Igor Kopelnitsky

In August, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan announced that the capitol of the country would be moved several hundred miles north, from the green city of Almaty, where the presidential palace stands against a background of snow-capped mountains, to the bleak and windy steppes of north-central Kazakhstan, to the present city of Akmola. The official reasons for the move included a more central location, limited building space in Almaty, environmental pollution, and geology—moving away from the southeastern mountainous corner with its earthquakes to the much safer north-central region. The many fault lines in the hills and valleys around Almaty are not nearly so dangerous as the explosive fault line in the population itself, the division of the country into Kazakhs and Russians. Here lies the potential for more disaster than the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Most Westerners cannot find Kazakhstan on a map, and its 17 million people are less than three percent of the world's population. The country appears to have the third largest oil reserves in the world, making its citizens potentially as rich as the Saudis, since Kazakhstan also has vast deposits of coal, copper, and gold. Kazakhstan's larger neighbors—China, Russia, and Turkey—are all aware that here is a treasure chest guarded by a very few people who are deeply divided among themselves and who have weak loyalties to their new leaders.

This huge area is ripe to be fought over. Already Russia's ultranationalist Zhirinovsky has promised to take it over, and even Solzhenitsyn says northern Kazakhstan, its predominantly Russian population, and its minerals are rightfully Russia's. In late October, he received applause and cheers when he told the Russian parliament that Kazakhstan should be brought back under Russian sovereignty.

When President Nazarbayev said the capitol should be closer to the industrialized north, he was also closer to the true reasons for moving. He not only plans to move the presidency and several ministries to Akmola, but also wants to put other ministries in other northern cities. The move would be a transparent attempt to spread the overwhelmingly Kazakh government apparatus into overwhelmingly Russian-dominated territories. The government is already preparing some parts of the north for Kazakhs migrating in from other countries where they took refuge from communism.

Leonid Brezhnev set up Kazakhstan for its present troubles. Brezhnev served the Communist Party for two years in Kazakhstan. When he ascended to power in Moscow, his Kazakh comrade D.A. Kunaev began to accumulate power as first secretary in Kazakhstan and the first Kazakh ever to sit on the Politburo. By 1981, Kazakhs had been appointed to 60 percent of the republic's cabinet posts. Kunaev cashed in politically on his loyalty to Brezhnev and the party. He was rewarded by massive funding for public works and by more *nomenklatura* positions for Kazakhs. Brezhnev effectively gave the government of Kazakhstan to the Kazakh minority. Kunaev did not survive *perestroika*, but his legacy did.

The division between the Kazakh and Russian peoples lies beneath a tranquil surface that has barely rumbled in the past 60 years. The government denies that the fault is deep or dangerous. But denial no more disproves its existence than the presence of new buildings in San Francisco disproves the San Andreas fault. Like the San Andreas, the Kazakhstan ethnic fault line, however peaceful at the moment, is obvious to the eye.

First, people think of themselves and advertise themselves not as Kazakhstanis, citizens of a country, but as Kazakhs and Russians, and occasionally as Germans, Uighurs, Poles, Koreans, or Ukrainians. Of 56 personal ads in a recent issue of the capitol's largest paper, *Karavan*, 75 percent identify the advertiser as "Kazakh" or "Russian" or "European." Language differences do not cause this division, since all the ads are in

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Russian, and finding a Kazakh under 70 who does not speak Russian requires a long search, generally among the rural yurts and herdsmen. In the "We Look for Work" ads, ethnic labels are a small percent but are not uncommon.

Anyone who regularly visits government offices also sees the fault lines. The higher you go in the bureaucracy, the clearer the divisions. Cabinet ministers are Kazakh. The powerful first deputies who influence policy are Kazakh. Almost all the presidential and vice presidential advisors are Kazakhs. Kazakh ministers and deputy ministers generally outnumber Russians by five to one. Department heads who actually get the work done may be Russian or Kazakh. Positions that offer opportunities for large bribes and "service fees" are usually Kazakh. This is true from high government offices to the notorious and universally despised traffic police, the *Gai*, who stand along city streets and flag cars at random for "document checks." Their black-and-white-striped batons are money-making wands.

A sweeping dismissal of high government officials in mid-October only strengthened Kazakh domination. Prime Minister Tereschenko, once sharing power with Nazarbayev as a symbol of unity, was replaced by a Kazakh. At a news conference, the new prime minister, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, said Russian flight was motivated by economics, not ethnic conflict. The two, however, are quickly becoming one problem. Government positions often hold the keys to economic resources, since the government remains the major employer and principal owner of the 70 or so giant holding companies that are supposed to privatize industry and business.

Some American diplomats have tried to pass off ethnic strife as Kazakh clannishness. Indeed, their clannishness is the strength that creates a family safety net for many troubled Kazakhs. But it is also exclusive—not only of Russians. In Western Mongolia, where a large number of Kazakhs live, Mongolians complain that once Kazakhs were allowed into an organization, they took over and gave the best posts to other Kazakhs. Yet Kazakhstan's constitution declares "equal rights for all the citizens in respect to their access to the civil service."

In the factories, especially in northern Kazakhstan's industrial region, Russians hold over 75 percent of the best blue-collar and technical jobs. As unemployment grows, particularly in the rural and arid south, Kazakhs are not happy about the number of employed Russians, even those earning as little as $25 or $40 a month. Many Kazakh laborers work for much less on collective farms or on ad hoc building crews that employ recent migrants from the countryside. The fact that thousands of Russian workers are leaving for Russia makes little difference to Kazakhs, many of whom do not have the skills for the vacated jobs. Other jobs are disappearing altogether, as industries lose their subsidies and go broke.

Kazakhs often see themselves as victims of history, deprived of culture and education. They want compensation before competition. Before they play with the Russians, who are generally better educated, have better technical skills, and have more money, the Kazakhs want to level the field. They are hesitant or simply unwilling to compete in any meaningful way—in elections, in the job market, or in the privatization process. Americans who understand the mentality of affirmative action will grasp the Kazakh perspective.

Kazakhstan had elections in March 1994, but only for parliament, and almost half the candidates were nominated by President Nazarbayev. Foreign observers and the foreign press overwhelmingly judged the elections unfair—from campaigning to vote counting. The president also appoints the cabinet ministers, oblast officials, and city mayors. Under the latest reshuffle, a member of the presidential apparat would be assigned to each oblast to oversee the local government's work.

The Russians in northern Kazakhstan dominate that area as thoroughly as Kazakhs dominate the south, and on their northern border lies the industrial belt of Russia's Siberia. The Russians have already begun to show their discontent.

The president's grand promises of privatizing government business and moving assets and earning power into the hands of citizens have also become increasingly hollow. Early in the privatization effort, the president's leading advisor, Korean-American Dr. Chan Young Bang, said the work was a severe disappointment. The original plan and later versions relied on placing state enterprises under large holding companies in order to prepare their management, bookkeeping, and production for privatization. Ambassador William Courtney continues to justify a big American aid effort (the United States provides over 80 percent of foreign aid to Kazakhstan) by citing President Nazarbayev's edicts and rhetoric and accepting small progress as a token of bigger things to come. The most recent change of cabinet ministers and prime minister, like previous housecleanings, was done in the name of reform. At a January meeting contractors for USAID, most of whom work closely with the Kazakhstani government and nonprofit organizations, were significantly more pessimistic about the results than Ambassador Courtney. Perhaps the new officials will quicken the pace of privatization, but the character of government and its policies is not likely to change until Nazarbayev allows the citizens a really free choice of representatives and president. The more he supports affirmative action for Kazakhs, the less likely it is that a free election would return him or his parliament to office.

Some of the consultants who hand out and take home American aid try to paint the ethnic conflict in politically correct terms. Eric Rudenshiold of the International Republican Institute has argued that Russians have a "Western belief in exploiting profits from the land's natural resources" while "ethnic Kazakhs are often opposed to the further rape of their homeland." Few things have raped the landscape more thoroughly than Kazakh sheepherding. But even

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Rudenshiold's false distinction leads him to conclude that the main obstacle to privatization is "the transfer of property and resulting empowerment of non-Kazakhs."

Despite Ambassador Courtney's guarded optimism, President Nazarbayev's political strategy has been to consolidate Kazakh control in the wake of independence. To do it, he has centralized power and created an organizational structure that mimics the communist system of central command. The number of businesses scheduled for privatization has dropped from 5,000 last year to 1,500 today. Western accounting firms advising on privatization say the businesses finally put on the auction block were the dregs. In September, Courtney admitted he was troubled by the slowdown. Even more troubling were indications that the 70-plus giant holding companies would not sign off their holdings in the marketplace and distribute the country's wealth. The holding companies themselves may be sold as giant conglomerates. The American embassy's economic officer quickly recognized that the conglomerates would be large enough to act as monopolies in many areas.

Since independence the government has tried to avoid an open discussion of Kazakh-Russian tensions. The official line was that harmony reigned. Russians saw it otherwise. Shortly after independence, they got slapped in the face with new laws and ethnic slights, such as the Program for the Development of Kazakh and Other National Languages. It called for converting public record-keeping into Kazakh, which was scheduled to begin in some areas as early as 1993. In November 1993, when the country had a division of Britain's Lonrho print its new money, Russians who traded in their rubles found not a word of their language on the new bills, not a trace of their art, not the face or name of an ethnic Russian. It was as if all American currency were suddenly printed in Spanish or our only printable heroes and heroines had names like De Soto, Cortez, Serra, and De León. (The Spanish were not the first to settle America, and neither were the Kazakhs the first to occupy Kazakhstan.)

Last year Sherkhan Murtaza, a Kazakh member of parliament and Chairman of the Kazgosteleradio Committee, told other deputies that the country had no single citizenry. It had "Kazakh peoples" and "representatives of peoples living in Kazakhstan." When officials occasionally commented on the thousands of Russians moving to Russia, they always noted that some were coming in and that net migration was positive. Only in August did the government statistical office publish figures that reflected what everyone already knew.

The figures showed an average net out-migration of 156,000 people per year, or about one percent of the population. Birthrates for Russians had fallen steeply and neither Russians nor other European minorities were having enough children to replace themselves. The Kazakh birthrate had fallen too, but remained well above replacement level. With some 23,000 Kazakh immigrants moving in from other countries, including China, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, the annual increase since 1990 has been 2.6 percent a year. In June, the Almaty Kazakh Radio Network announced that 60,000 of the 100,000 ethnic Kazakhs of Mongolia were now in Kazakhstan.

Russians in the capitol of Almaty, a city created by Russians from a Russian fortress and whose name at independence was quickly changed from the Russian Alma Ata, say that in the last ten years the once predominantly Russian city of 1.2 million has become mainly Kazakh. Apartment prices plummeted in the winter of 1993-94, mainly because of the steady outflow of Russian "ooezhayooshis" or leavers. Both Russians and Kazakhs believe the real reason for moving the capitol north is to extend Kazakh influence. If the move really happens and the government spends $15 to $50 billion on transporting masses of paper and conference tables and the households of bureaucrats when the average pension is less than $20 a month, the government will have to show great benefits, especially to the poor citizens of the heavily Kazakh southland.

Like many timid leaders trying to create a revolution without the clamor of discussion, President Nazarbayev speaks of unity while presiding over schism. At a conference of state organs in May 1993, the president declared that civil peace and ethnic harmony were the "first goal of political work" and proposed that the population unite in Kazakhstani patriotism. Patriotism is earned by governments, not declared by independence movements or desperate politicians.

Today I observe no signs of Kazakhstani patriotism. I see no house or apartment window flying the Kazakhstani flag, no matter what the occasion. The ratio of American to Kazakhstani flags hanging from car mirrors and fixed to windows or stamped on T-shirts must be greater than 500 to one. A country with diversity but without patriotism is a country by survey rather than character. Its character is that of a fault zone accumulating stress.

The first signs of trouble in this country came in December 1986, when Gorbachev dismissed D.A. Kunaev, a Kazakh, as first secretary of the Communist Party and appointed Genadii Kolbin, a Russian with no ties to Kazakhstan. Mobs of Kazakh students, Komsomol members, and volunteer militia armed with knives and sticks beat up Russians in the streets of Almaty. The eruption dissipated only when Russian factory workers began to mobilize and Moscow's still strong military threatened to take over. Today, President Nazarbayev has not achieved his "first goal of political work," and the underlying causes of the riots remain.

Civil wars in countries like this are not started by massive uprisings, but by fringe groups who start fighting that soon forces the rest of the population to take sides. Kazakhs have a number of ultra-nationalist groups. In late December, one of these groups held a rally in front of the presidential palace commemorating their people who had died in the 1986 riots. One speaker drew loud applause when he noted that the population of the capitol was now 46 percent Kazakh and would be over 50 percent by the year 2000. Their Russian fringe opponents are the descendants of Cossack warrior settlers who built the fort city Verni, which later became Almaty.

Last October, Kazakhs kidnapped the leader of the Kazakhstani Cossacks (descendants of the Russian Cossack troops who led the colonization of central Asia over 150 years ago). The kidnappers immediately demanded that the Cossacks be thrown out of civilian and military government posts and deported to Russia. Ethnic Russians appealed to Russia for help, and the Russian foreign ministry demanded a maximum Kazakh effort to free the victim and punish his captors. The incident raises the very real prospect that there is a trigger that will bring "Mother Russia" to the aid of people she still considers family. The ruling Kazakhs responded to increasing Kazakh rhetoric in December by banning Cossack activity around the capitol for six months. Cossacks, however, continue to demand that Russian be made an official govern-

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ment language alongside Kazakh and that the government hold a referendum to allow people to decide whether to join the Russian federation. In a similar referendum in 1991 the vote was "yes" and the government's response was "no."

The country is conveniently divided for a civil war. In southern oblasts, Kazakhs are a 60-90 percent majority. They are buttressed on their southern border by an even deeper reservoir of anti-Russian feeling—Uzbekistan. Uzbeks often refer to Russian as an "infidel language" and to Russia as "Kafirstan" or "Infidel Land." Uzbekistan has begun eradicating the Russian language from public life, even for Russian-educated Uzbeks. Uzbekistan's leadership feels it is the true representative of central Asia's Turkic-speaking people since it is more Turkic than Kazakhstan, where Russians are numerous, and since Turkey has Westernized.

The Russians in northern Kazakhstan dominate that area as thoroughly as Kazakhs dominate the south, and on their northern border lies the industrial belt of Russia's Siberia. The Russians have already begun to show their discontent. Last August, 2,000 angry pensioners gathered in Lenin Square in the town of Rudny, 125 miles south of the Russian border. They demanded pension payments that were three months overdue. When no one appeared to answer their demands, a squadron of them invaded city hall and forced the mayor into the square, where old ladies beat him with umbrellas and walking sticks.

The more control Kazakh politicians take from Russians, the more responsibility they will have to bear for adding to the crushing economic burden. Russians who cannot leave, or who call Kazakhstan home after three or four generations, or who simply like living there, think increasingly about support from the north. As they see less and less opportunity and economic protection from the government, the more Russian they feel. The Yeltsin regime has taken several moves to encourage both this feeling and the sense that, in a crisis, they would be protected by Russia.

Last September, the Russian news agency reported that Yeltsin's treaty negotiators in Ukraine insisted on dual citizenship for ethnic Russians. Dual citizenship had been suggested earlier this year for Kazakhstani Russians in what appeared to be a trial balloon. It would be the legal basis for Russian intervention in a crisis in its "near abroad." As the Russian negotiator in the Ukraine said, dual citizenship "is a basic position of Russia's policy not only toward Ukraine but also toward the other CIS states."

Russia has, in fact, recently declared its right to intervene in the affairs of its former republics. Its special envoy to Georgia, for example, Feliks Kovalev, announced that Russia "has no intention of considering ratification" of Georgia's territorial boundaries "until the resolution of the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-Ossetian conflicts." Russia's treatment of Chechnya has also made Kazakhs feel considerably more threatened.

Clearly, the more Kazakhstan's government defines the social and political boundaries between Kazakhs and Russians, the less secure its geographic boundaries become. Kazakhstan seems destined to prove that the boundaries of the former Soviet republics are far from firmly defined and that the final survey may require expensive and bloody flagging.

In Memoriam

by Andrew Lansdown

1
We knew something was wrong
because of the blood
but we had not expected this.
I can't find a heart beat,
the doctor says. *I'm sorry.*

2
Dear child you died
in the secret safe place
alone. What did you suffer?
How could we have known?
Oh son, daughter, I'm sorry.

3
I collected the images
from the ultrasound, the record,
child, of your short life
and long death. I burnt them
to spare your mother. I'm sorry.

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Pariahs and Favorites in East Central Europe

by Ewa M. Thompson

"How horrible, fantastic, incredible, it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing."

—Neville Chamberlain

Igor Kopelnitsky

Persons with roots in Central and Eastern Europe know that to speak with minimal competence about that part of the world requires making a distinction between East Central Europe (Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Slovakia), the Balkans (the former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, partly Greece), and the post-Soviet states of Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine. East Central Europe is as different from the Balkans as Canada is from Argentina.

Since the times of Neville Chamberlain, not much has changed in Western consciousness regarding this region. It still consists of faraway lands of which we know nothing. Or rather, Americans know enough to blame them (as well as the Balkans) for triggering two world wars and generally making trouble for the Western world. Hence the undercurrent of sympathy toward the Russian czars and commissars whose mission has been to constrain these unruly folks between the Oder and the Dnieper rivers.

The professed ignorance about East Central Europe, which Chamberlain's statement exemplifies, is a bit duplicitous. Even such American pooh-bahs as Helmut Sonnenfeldt, who once advocated merging East Central Europe with Russia, have known that before the 1945 Yalta agreements, Russians had never dominated all of today's Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, or Hungary. Civilizationally, the great divide between Poland and Russia has not been breached, as Samuel P. Huntington reminds us in his essay "The Clash of Civilizations?" (*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993). Yet the Sonnenfeldt "doctrine," conceived when the Soviet Union was a superpower, advocated disregarding that divide and urged the West to give up on 90 million people east of the Elbe River—a classic case of what James Burnham once called "the contraction of the West."

Western European powers have had a hand in undermining East Central European states and replacing them with multinational empires, while at the same time guarding and nurturing their own territorial, cultural, and linguistic identities. Then the triumphant nationalists of Western Europe and the United States accused East Central Europe of nationalism. The causes and consequences of the slicing of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth into three parts in 1795 are to this day glaringly omitted from the textbooks of Western European history, as if that event did not presage a new dynamic among European states by bringing Russia into the equation and extending her borders dangerously westward. Edmund Burke

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and Lord Dahlberg-Acton wrote cogently about the ganging-up on the Commonwealth in 1772, 1793, and 1795, but their comments were disregarded. The Congress of Vienna, lauded by Western historians as a fountainhead of peace in Europe, confirmed the partition of the largest state in East Central Europe and divided it among various empires with scant regard to religion, language, and cultural tradition. The 1815 Vienna accord was a time bomb which erupted in 1830 in Poland, in 1848 in several European countries, and then again in 1914. If the Russian Empire was a prison of nations, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was surely a cacophony of nations clamoring for self-definition, which a territorial empire could ill afford—while Prussia, that "bastard state" of Europe, straddled German and Polish lands.

Russian apologists in American academia, and lassitude of mind toward matters which are not actively promoted by any interest group, have eliminated from English usage the words "Ruthenia" and "Ruthenian," signifying the territories and nations between Poland and Russia. Lithuanians, a brave and stubborn people, snatched Ruthenia from the Mongol empire in the 14th century. In 1386, a dynastic union joined Poland and Lithuania, giving Poland the fatal opportunity to play imperialist—which she did until 1795, when she herself fell to the imperialism of her neighbors, and with her Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine.

In conditions of widespread literacy, which invariably fosters ethnic identity, and with democratic political philosophies popularized in print, nationalism was bound to flourish on the European continent. In countries united by language and history, nationalism manifested itself in closing the ranks and self-glorification ("God is an Englishman"), while in multinational and multicultural countries it was bound to be disruptive. Quite simply, the perception was that certain ethnic groups lorded it over others, and that this was contrary to democratic principles. The partitioning of Central and Eastern Europe by empires, at a time when national identities had already congealed, was bound to prevent the creation of linguistically and culturally homogeneous societies, and it damaged the relations between the "occupied" nations. Even now, the small and midsized nations of Central and Eastern Europe are strangers to one another. A certain amount of mute contempt, which defeated nations often harbor toward one another, enters the equation. France, England, and Germany have profited from the exaggerated and sympathetic attention that the countries of the Balkans and of East Central Europe should have bestowed on one another.

Some long-standing animosities were exploited by the respective empires. The Polish-Ukrainian conflict, which goes back to the times when Poles ruled Ukraine, was used by Austrians who conspired to pit Ukrainian peasants against Polish landlords in 19th-century Galicia. In Ukraine, many years of anti-Ukrainian Soviet propaganda created a backlash of admiration for Ukrainian nationalists such as Stefan Bandera, whose soldiers murdered Jews and Poles. Lithuanians dislike the Poles for the Polonization of Lithuania that occurred when both countries were tied by the dynastic union; this was used by the Russians when they occupied Lithuania. On November 6, 1994, a Lithuanian bridge was blown up, and a hitherto unknown Polish National Liberation Movement claimed responsibility. Zbigniew Semenowicz, a Polish minority representative in the Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament), said that he had never heard of such a group, and that if it existed, it must have been created by the Russian secret police. The Lithuanians concurred. Such incidents (called *provokatsiya* in Russian) have stoked many an ethnic fire, to the Russians' benefit.

The West views these nations as upstarts because they enjoyed no political independence in the 19th century. But in their own eyes, they remained countries under *foreign occupation*. They did not experience that leisurely development of national ideologies so characteristic of Western countries and so invisible to Western eyes. While the energies of East Central European nations were sapped by the fight for independence, the energies of the West found an outlet in the creation of wealth. What lies in the national interest is often misunderstood in East Central Europe, let alone in the Balkans and the post-Soviet states. The countries of the region did not develop patterns of political behavior that are effective and intelligible to others. The issue of public relations and of the national image is poorly understood. To Western eyes, these countries remain largely unintelligible in the puzzling reversals of their reforms, the awkwardness of their diplomats, the surprising results of their elections, and the apathy of their voters after so much sacrifice to secure the right to vote.

As long as Poland remains Poland, i.e., as long as its people refuse to reduce Christianity to the realm of private hobbies, they will be treated as untouchables by America's power class. Poles lack that qualifying grace of distancing themselves from old-time religion, which Czech intellectuals such as Thomas Masaryk or Edward Benes represented.

The 1938 Munich agreement is symbolic in many ways of Western attitudes toward East Central Europe. The United States and Western Europe realize that the results of abandoning East Central Europe to its own fate will not instantly affect them. The dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and even war on the Polish front in 1939 gave the French and British additional months of relative peace and prosperity. Only in hindsight did Munich turn out to be a mistake. So the temptation to do nothing is great. In October 1991, a Heritage Foundation study by William D. Eggers recommended that the United States withhold funding for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) until the European Community agrees to reduce trade barriers to Eastern Europe. Nothing of the sort has been done, and one-way

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Western tariffs continue to cripple East Central European economies. Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski keep reminding us that, at present, NATO protects those European borders which need no protection rather than those which need protection. But an effort of will to incorporate East Central Europe into NATO has not been made.

Largely without being noticed, the American intellectual establishment has set up its own rules of political correctness in regard to the countries of this region. The best treatment is reserved for the Czechs, the worst, for the Poles. Consider the anonymous papers published by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (an American government agency), assessing democratic liberties in postcommunist Europe. "Human Rights and Democratization in the Czech Republic" (September 1994) repeatedly emphasizes that in various East European countries, as well as in the United States, serious crimes against human rights have been committed, and the Czech Republic occasionally falls in the same category: "Although the basic idea of expelling ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary had been blessed by the United States . . . the methods used for the expulsions were, in many instances, neither 'orderly' nor 'humane,' as ultimately called for by Czechoslovak and international authorities. . . . Although the expulsion of ethnic Germans appears to have been even more brutal and more lethal in regions east of the Czech lands, the issue of the expulsion of Sudeten Germans appears to have become a question of far greater political significance in the Czech Republic than in post-communist Poland or Russia." "Each country and every nation," the report continues, "has inglorious pages in its history and the United States is no exception; Americans continue to struggle with a legacy of slavery, brutal treatment of native Americans, and even the wrongful confinement of American citizens because of their race during World War II." The author states that the Czechs have not had an impeccable record in regard to the Gypsies, but also implies that mistreatment of Gypsies is equally severe in Poland and Hungary: "According to a 1991 opinion poll conducted in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, 85 percent of the Czechoslovak respondents said they would not like to have Roma [Gypsies] as neighbors." Figures for Poland or Hungary are not provided. There are laudatory passages about the founding of the Czechoslovak state and the Czech record in general: "the Czech Republic has received admiration for its overall record on human rights and political stability."

No such tiptoeing can be found in "Human Rights and Democratization in Poland" (January 1994). Here, the author tends to highlight individual incidents, implying that they illustrate the rule: "For example, in 1991 there were violent attacks on members of the Roma community in the village of Mlava. In spite of the brutal nature of the assaults, the attacks resulted in only light sentences, giving rise to concerns that the government is insufficiently sensitive to the threat of ethnic, religious and linguistic intolerance." Note the imputed lack of a separation of powers. Nothing is said about the reemergence of the Polish state in 1918, about the Polish-Soviet war of 1920-21, which culminated in the battle of the Vistula and stopped the Soviet advance into then left-leaning Germany—not a word.

But there is much annoyance at the attempt by Poles to stop abortion on demand: "Contrary to public sentiment, some legislators in the previous parliament, posing as the self-appointed guardians of Catholicism, engaged in heavy-handed tactics to push through a provision requiring religious education in schools, a media law that demands respect for the 'Christian system of values,' and an abortion ban that provides criminal penalties for both doctors and patients." This last bit of information is mendacious. The Polish antiabortion law of 1993 specifies that only individuals performing, not undergoing, abortions *may* be punished. When I wrote about these matters to Senator Dennis deConcini, he wrote back admitting the misstatement of fact but without apologies and vigorously defending the brochure.

Why do the rules of political correctness continue to damn Poland with faint praise? The Czechs are astute and tough-minded people, but they are neither better nor worse than others in East Central Europe. Charter 77 enlisted about 1,300 people, but Poland's Solidarity had 10 million members, and it was the only nonviolent mass movement ever to present a united front to communism. The Solidarity labor movement played a role comparable in importance to Ronald Reagan's Pershings in Germany, Mikhail Gorbachev's reformism, and Pope John Paul II's moral support. So why is Poland a pariah among the politically correct?

Part of the answer is precisely because Poland did play a key role in the abolition of communism. Too many American academics were sorry to see communism go, having built their careers on explaining how it functions and having articulated a model of the world into which communism nicely fitted. Another piece of the puzzle is the deep-seated prejudice of the American elites *against* Catholicism, the confession to which 98 percent of Poles profess allegiance, according to a September 1994 poll. Anti-Catholicism is still the anti-Semitism of American intellectuals. As long as Poland remains Poland, i.e., as long as its people refuse to reduce Christianity to the realm of private hobbies, they will be treated as untouchables by America's power class. Poles lack that qualifying grace of distancing themselves from old-time religion, which Czech intellectuals such as Thomas Masaryk or Edward Benes represented. The prewar Czechoslovak government was profoundly anti-Catholic, drawing its strength from a largely secularized and anticlerical Bohemia (in contrast to the strongly Catholic Moravia, the other part of the Czech Republic). Ever since the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, when the Protestant Czech patriots lost to the hated Catholic Austrian Habsburgs, who absorbed Czech lands into their empire, the tenor of political discourse in Czechia has been more than a little anti-Catholic.

Vigorous attempts have been made to remake Poland into a country where the "intelligentsia," or college-educated section of the population, share an attitude of bemused superiority in regard to all that Polish Catholicism represents. Adam Michnik's *Gazeta Wyborcza* is the Polish equivalent of the *New York Times*. Allegations continue to fly in Poland that the cooperative firm Agora, which publishes *Gazeta*, appropriated the lion's share of the funds American taxpayers sent to Poland to support Solidarity's publications. But those who accused *Gazeta* of misappropriations have failed to produce any evidence of wrongdoing. *Gazeta* has captured a large share of the newspaper market, and together with *Polityka* (edited by "reformist" communists), it exercises an influence on the Polish reading classes. Polish conservative publications are underfunded, and their runs are small. Significantly, the only philosophically conservative publication of any size is the

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trade union weekly *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*.

The armchair warriors who talked about the return to Poland of Lviv (the capital of western Ukraine) and Vilnius (the capital of Lithuania) are history. But the dream of a Polish role in re-Christianizing Belarus, Ukraine, and perhaps Russia is strong, as witnessed by the throngs of Polish priests and nuns who volunteer to go east as missionaries, risking life and limb. While some chauvinistic Ukrainians are forming paramilitary units and demanding a piece of southeast Poland, their role in Ukrainian politics seems confined to the lunatic fringe. The Czechs are less than friendly toward Hungarians and Germans, with whom they have had historical disputes. The Poles are suspicious of Germans and Ukrainians, not to mention Russians. Belarus is barely holding to its name, and English usage is unhelpful, for it has not yet decided how to call the nationals of that country: Belarusses or Belarussians?

These problems do not pose a clear and present danger to East Central European stability and peace. None of the East Central European countries is about to slide into violence because of infighting, minority oppression, and the like. The peaceful division of Slovakia and Czechia (despite continuing bickering over property and the citizenship of 100,000 Gypsies) exemplifies the relations between nations in this area of Europe. Hungary's bitterness concerning the substantial Hungarian minorities in Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia will not translate into armed intervention.

The main danger is the revival of Russian imperialist ambitions. The blindness of the West in that regard, the frequency with which American scholars and journalists express their fear that a "fascist" trend may take over in "Eastern Europe," are really marks of their sympathy for Russia, of a longing that some day post-Soviet Russia will reassert its will over half of European civilization, altering the fundamentals of that civilization. The left's fierce reaction to articles such as Huntington's, as well as vociferous opposition from erstwhile "Soviet experts" in academia to NATO membership for Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, are of similar provenance. This longing and opposition stem from the *Suicide of the West* basis of liberalism so eloquently argued by the late James Burnham.

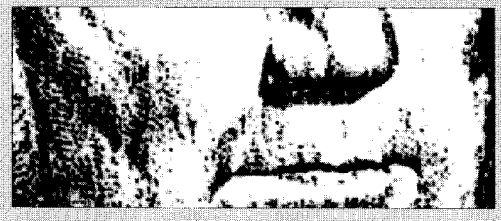
The continuing preferential treatment of Russia by Western elites is by far the most destabilizing factor in this region. Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, and Hungary vis-à-vis Russia are like free-standing bottles of liquor facing an alcoholic. Instead of removing the Russian temptation to expand by eliminating the power vacuum in East Central Europe, Western leaders contribute to the growth of Russia's revanchism by signaling their indecisiveness to the Russian Foreign Office. While the IMF-imposed budgets of East Central European countries keep national deficits around three to four percent of the GDP (the Czech Republic has none), the same IMF allows Russia a deficit that is twice that (8.3 percent in the first six months of 1994 and, according to the "fantasy budget" approved by the Duma on January 25, "only" 7.7 percent in 1995). Western lenders turn a blind eye to the fact that Russian deficits finance the military and not the citizenry.

After the 1993 coup, when Yeltsin apparently struck a deal with the army, Russian foreign policy changed dramatically. It became aggressive and assertive. The West has made a weak response to the reawakening of Russia's territorial greed. Yet it is virtually certain that if Russia yields to the temptation of stepping into the East Central European power vacuum, before these countries are absorbed by NATO, she will *eo ipso* sign a death warrant for her own chances of democracy and peaceful development.

During the Cold War, Western leaders welcomed any state they could into NATO. Greece, Turkey, and Norway all served the common purpose of enlarging the realm of Western security. Turkey bordered directly on the Soviet Union, and Norway continues to border on the Russian Federation. Yet the Soviets (who were stronger and more dangerous than the Russians are now) did not say much when these countries joined NATO. But today, the West genuflects before Russia's demand that the realm of Western security be strengthened no further, certainly not by admitting the countries of East Central Europe into NATO.

If an armed conflict develops in this region in the 1990's or early 21st century, it will be caused, abetted, and directed by Russians. It will be similar to those conflicts that Russia has so skillfully stirred up along its southern border (the Chechen saga is a recent example). All other East Central European wars are virtually certain to be fought in letters to the editor and speeches in parliament. The nations of the region are now busy nursing their bruised national identities. Their overwhelmingly nonradical political parties try to return to normalcy, for they never lost sight of their vision of normalcy. That is what they want—to be "ordinary" European countries, just like Holland or France, surrounded by other European countries, bickering in their parliaments over problems of economy and culture. During the foreseeable future, relations between these nations will remain correct if not cordial—unless they once again fall to intrigue and violence from the East.

LIBERAL ARTS



COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS?

"We should really appreciate the Louis Farrakhans and Khallid Muhammads while we've got them. While these guys talk a lot, they don't actually do anything. The new crop of leaders are going to be a lot more dangerous and radical, and the next phase will probably be led by charismatic individuals, maybe even teenagers, who urge that instead of killing each other, they should go out in gangs and kill a whole lotta white people."

—Derrick Bell, a black New York University law professor, as quoted in the Chicago Tribune.

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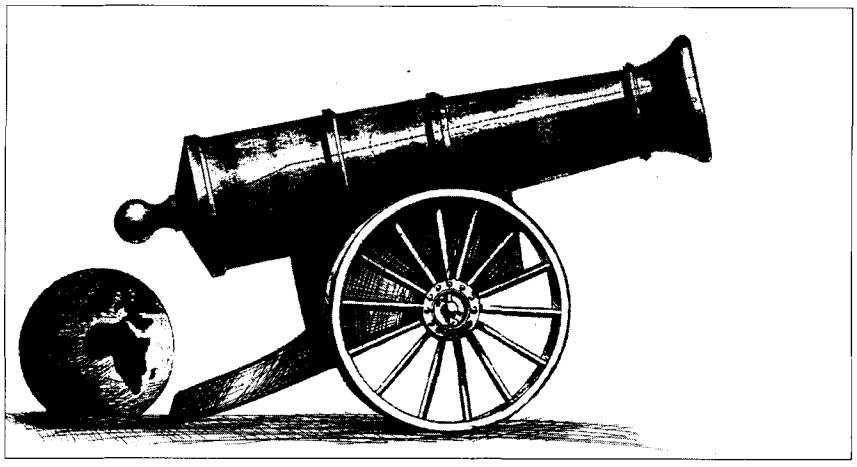
Uncle Sam and the Third Balkan War

by Dhimitrios Gheorghiou



Igor Kopelnitsky

Whenever you hear the New World Order crowd whining about the obligation of the "international community" to come to the rescue of a "multiethnic democracy" threatened by "nationalism," get ready for Uncle Sam to be dragged off on a fool's errand. This term, "multiethnic democracy," the prime exemplar of which is supposedly the United States, is state-of-the-art New World Order lingo for the new type of state designed to supplant the old nation-state, which is based on retrograde "nationalism." "Nationalism" is pejorative, referring to the aspiration, heretofore considered natural and honorable, of any people to live in its own homeland, contingent upon that people's ability and willingness to fight for it and sustain it. In their untiring vigilance against any holdouts, current or potential, against the homogenized, deracinated world government in the making, all lovers of progress oppose ethnically-based nationalism at home and abroad. Exhibit A of this phenomenon is the hatred of the Bad Old South Africa, particularly Afrikaner nationalism, and the wild enthusiasm for the Good New South Africa, an aspiring "multiethnic democracy" labeled a "rainbow nation" by French President François Mitterrand. The new African National Congress-dominated regime, with the rest of the world's approval, is determined to stamp out any remnant of autonomy for the Afrikaners and Zulus, the genuine nations in South Africa with the strongest sense of identity and cohesion. Incidentally, that stamping out may yet involve slapping blue helmets on the United States Army's 82nd Airborne.

The endangered "multiethnic democracy" of the moment is, of course, Bosnia-Hercegovina. According to proponents of intervention in the Balkans, Bosnia was once a dreamland where Catholic Croat, Orthodox Serb, Muslim, and Jew lived in peace and harmony, frequently intermarried (a big selling point), and respected and tolerated each other until, inexplicably, the Serbs, incited by the Hitler-of-the-Month, Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, suffered an atavistic fit of nationalism. The only decent response, in the New World Order, is to stage a Studs Turkelesque "Good War" to restore Bosnia to its pristine state.

In pursuit of this goal, the entire *apparat* of the West has cranked into action. Atrocity stories, war crimes, even *genocide*. Grim footage of—yes!—*death camps*, in the heart of Europe, back after 50 years! Mortar bombs raining down upon civilians in bread lines and marketplaces (never mind who the real perpetrators were, or why Muslim cameras just happened to be ready at the scene). The shelling of hospitals (omitting little details like guns mounted on hospital roofs). Evil Serb snipers shooting Muslim children in a bus (the fact that the murdered children were actually Orthodox Christians—i.e., Serbs—somehow getting lost in the shuffle). Elie Wiesel wailing on opening day at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Zubin Mehta leading the Sarajevo Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Mozart's *Requiem* in the shelled-out ruins of the National Library, broadcast to 26 countries worldwide. Peter Jennings in an hour-long nationally televised pout. Patricia Ireland and the National Organization for Women demonstrating against the elusive "rape hotels."

Somehow, though, America "just didn't get it." Despite a sustained, three-year propaganda symphony not equaled since the Spanish Civil War in its comprehensiveness, striking imagery, and nearly undetectable smothering of dissent—plus assurances of no American ground troops, just surgical air strikes, which do not count as real war—Americans, in a shocking manifestation of niggardliness and blighted global consciousness, remain unwilling to send their sons (and daughters) into this particular abattoir. Maybe they felt gypped by the outcome of the crusade against the previous Hitler-of-the-Month, Saddam Hussein. Or maybe, in his own spasm of tribalism *à la Serbe*, Joe Sixpack done figgered out that the United States military, if it survives feminization and sodomization by our Philanderer-in-Chief, would have its hands full taking care of our borders (assuming they are ever set to that task) without trotting them off as janissaries to save every "multiethnic democracy" that hoists a flag at the United Nations. Or maybe, despite a Made in America historical memory normally good for about two weeks of the latest O.J. Simpson developments, our typical fellow citizen has evolved an inarticulate but usually accurate political sense that tells him when he is being force-fed an uncommonly ripe batch of swill by the reigning pseudoaristocracy, representing both entrenched parties (from Bob Dole and Newt Gingrich to Joe Lieberman and Joe Biden), the news media (the networks,

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Dhimitrios Gheorghiou writes from Washington, D.C.

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CNN, National Socialist Public Radio, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Washington Times*), the opinion magazines (from the *New Republic* to *National Review*, from the *American Spectator* to the *Nation*), organized religion (Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim), the off-the-shelf scribblers and blabbermouths (from William Safire to Anthony Lewis and Susan Sontag), and a bevy of neoconservative pinups (Jeane Kirkpatrick, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Natan Scharansky, George Soros, Norman Podhoretz, Teddy Kollek, Albert Shanker, Richard Perle, Albert Wohlsetter, Joseph Brodsky, and Czeslaw Milosz, plus numerous others, demanding in the *Wall Street Journal* that the United States bomb not only the Bosnian Serbs but Serbia proper).

And on this one, our typical fellow citizen has got it right. Bosnia—in fact, the entire Balkans—is not "the heart of Europe": it is the charred, bone-paved gateway to the Middle East. It was *never* a dreamland of tolerance, but an arena of fierce and bloody struggle for supremacy and survival between Christians (in two mutually antagonistic varieties, Roman Catholic and Orthodox, not counting the now-extinct Bogomils) and Muslims; among communists, royalists, republicans, and nationalists of various hues; and among Serbs, Croats, Greeks, Bulgarians, Albanians, Germans, Italians, Magyars, Romanians, and Turks. If at any time a semblance of order existed in a given locale, it was only because one group or another was on top, and depending on the specifics, the other just had to live, or die, with the consequences. Rule Number One is this: you want your enemies to live as a minority in *your* state; you do not want to be a minority in *their* state. In the Balkans, the hazards of minority status can range from the fairly comfortable buy-out of their ill-gotten gains "suffered" by the Muslims under what amounted to Serb rule in pre-World War II Yugoslavia, to the horrendous oppression of Christians under five centuries of rule by these same Muslims, featuring such niceties as the Blood Tax (a periodic levy on the infidels' children), not to mention occasional bouts of pillage and massacre to remind them who rules in the *Dar-ul-Islam*.

As has been widely observed, the collapse of communism has led not to the end of history but to its reappearance. Perhaps the problem in the Balkans is that the place just has a lot more undigested history than most other regions. Seemingly on cue, starting in 1991, the natives took up their long knives and went after roughly the same throats as during the First and Second Balkan Wars (which occurred just before World War I), with encore performances during The War to End All Wars and its Sequel. Particularly striking is the degree to which the nearby regional powers have gravitated to the support of their traditional clients, setting up, in this Bosnia Round of the Third Balkan War, a semi-overt proxy war among Germany, Russia, and Turkey. Of course, there are always new—meaning, in the Balkans, reemerging—wrinkles. Last year, so-called neofascists, included for the first time in a post-war Italian government, raised the issue of whether certain parts of the Dalmatian coast should go to—they would say, be returned to—Italy. These areas encompass the major towns of Dubrovnik, Zadar, and Split, a.k.a., Ragusa, Zara, and Spoleto. The Serbs, who have their own republic in a nearby part of Dalmatia, think this is a dandy idea and have conferred honorary citizenship on a right-wing Italian senator. Meanwhile, NATO air strikes against the Serbs are launched from Italian bases. Croatia is a German satellite. Russia is as pro-Serb as it can afford to be, with the Yeltsin government tacking between appeasement of its Western benefactors and the outrage of domestic critics across the political spectrum: support for the Serbs is one of the few areas of policy where "democrats" pretty much agree with what they otherwise refer to as the "red-brown conspiracy." Britain and France, officially committed via NATO and the European Union to "the Western policy," i.e., a generally pro-Croat/German and pro-Muslim/Turkish orientation, favor a solution that leaves the Serbs with most of their current holdings, a manifestation of their traditional Germanophobia. The only really unprecedented element is the emergence of the United States as a zealous partisan of Muslim regional interests, along with Turkey, Iran, and pretty much the same lineup as in the anti-Iraq coalition in the Persian Gulf War.

The United States, by virtue not only of its tripwire in FYROM but its overall regional network of political and military assets, would be deeply committed to the Albanian/Turkish side in the Third Balkan War. Besides the local consequences, we would then have the makings of a sharp American/Russian confrontation.

More about America's metamorphosis into Uncle Salaam in a moment, but first back to the Balkan War. As noted above, the Bosnia Round, despite a lot of effort by the usual suspects, has not done the trick: the United States has not taken the bait. But, luckily for progressives everywhere, there happens to be another "multiethnic democracy" in the neighborhood that seems to be just what the spin doctor ordered, lurking under the improbable moniker of "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (FYROM).

Modern Macedonia is much like Kashmir or Israel/Palestine or the Falklands/Malvinas Islands, in the sense that hardly anyone really understands it, and most of those who do generally lie, or at least adhere to such astoundingly discordant versions of what passes for truth that they might as well be lying. Formerly the southern-most federal republic of Titoist Yugoslavia, FYROM is the home of over two million people, most of whom speak a Slavic language with features similar to Bulgarian and Serbian. These Slavic-speakers are, by tradition, Orthodox Christians. In addition, there is a Muslim minority, mostly Albanian, plus some Turks and Gypsies, located mostly in FYROM's northwest, bordering Albania and Koso-

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vo. FYROM is landlocked (surrounded by Greece, Albania, Serbia, and Bulgaria), poor, and mountainous. Its capital city is Skopje.

Apart from the meager data in the foregoing paragraph, there is next to nothing to be said about FYROM and its inhabitants that would not be subject to dispute. As an alternative to a blow-by-blow account of Macedonian events since Alexander rode Boukephalos off toward the sunrise, suffice it to say that topical questions include, but are certainly not limited to, the following: Are FYROM's Slavs really Serbs? (Even before annexing the region in 1912, Belgrade said yes, but during World War II, Tito, who was half-Slovene and half-Croat and all communist, decreed otherwise.) Are they Bulgarians? (Sofia, in two Balkan wars and as many world wars, has staked everything on the proposition that they are.) Or are they a distinct Macedonian nationality? (The relation of ethnonyms to toponyms can be very troublesome. By way of comparison, Englishmen, Welshmen, and Scots live in Britain, and are therefore called "Britons," but the previous Celtic inhabitants of the same land, also known as "Britons," were displaced or exterminated by the Germanic ancestors of today's Englishmen, with contemporary Welshmen and Scots constituting, in part anyway, survivors.) Are the Muslims a *minor* minority (under 20 percent, as FYROM Slavs say they are) or a *major* minority (over 40 percent, as FYROM Muslims themselves claim)? If the Slavs do constitute a nation, do the people of Bulgaria's Pirin region, who speak an identical form of Bulgarian or Macedonian or whatever it is, count as "Macedonians," with the obvious irredentist implications? (This is not an idle question. Relations between Sofia and Skopje almost broke down last year over the statement, in reference to a trade pact, that it was executed in "the Bulgarian and Macedonian languages," the latter of which Sofia rejects but Skopje insists upon.) What about the undetermined number of speakers of the same language in northern Greece, who, despite decades of relentless and sometimes brutal Hellenization, only by quite a stretch of the imagination meet Athens' surreal description of them as "Slavic-speaking Greeks"? Where does "Macedonia" end? (FYROM constitutes only about one-third of the region traditionally designated by the toponym "Macedonia," with most of the rest lying in Greece, including a lot of waterfront property and Greece's second-largest city, Thessaloniki.) And why do the answers to any of these questions matter, anyway?

Because FYROM is likely to be the place where the regional Balkan war, having misfired in Bosnia, finally goes off, pulling Serbia, Albania, Greece, Turkey, and probably Bulgaria, maybe even Romania and Hungary, into the melee, with each receiving the patronage of the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Italy, and doubtless many others. Moreover, in addition to its lack of internal ethnic cohesion and identity, FYROM occupies, as Misha Glenny has pointed out, a unique strategic position: "Control of Bosnia guarantees strategic superiority in the northern Balkans. And Macedonia (the Vardar Plain) is the only territory where the Balkan mountains can be traversed north to south and east to west. Thus, those who control Macedonia [i.e. FYROM] control the economy of the southern Balkans. The question is which traffic route will prevail." Actually, Glenny understates the issue: this is not a question of which way trucks will carry fish or rutabagas. It is one of regional dominance, which will run either along an axis from Constantinople west via Adrianople, Sofia, and Skopje, terminating at the Adriatic port of Durres, or along an axis from Thessaloniki through Skopje to Belgrade and points north. Or, to put it another way, if, on the one hand, the North/South orientation prevails, the Balkan Peninsula and all Central Europe, right down to the traditional entranceway into Hades where Cape Tainaron sinks into the sea, is firmly glued politically, economically, and culturally to the rest of the continent, with any serious Muslim influence confined to Turkey's vestigial hold on East Thrace (and even that, some still hope, might slip too). In such a case the main political task in the region is a rational apportionment of German and Russian spheres of influence (a decidedly Old World Order term that ought to be revived), a formidable but by no means impossible task.

On the other hand, if the East/West orientation prevails, the Turks are back at the gates of Vienna. (Figuratively speaking, since we are talking about the forceful reentry into European affairs of not just Turkey but the Islamic world in a broader sense. Of course, the Bihac "pocket" is still some 200 miles from Vienna, or 40 miles from Zagreb, but it amounts to the same thing). FYROM is the keystone that joins, on the east, the heavily Muslim Greek-Bulgarian border region extending to European Turkey, and, on the west, Albania, Kosovo (a province in Serbia with a 90 percent Albanian Muslim population), Sandzak (a Muslim-majority region in rump Yugoslavia, straddling the line between Serbia and Montenegro), and Bosnia-Hercegovina. The Bosnian Serbs call this "Allah's Road," a continuous line of Muslim settlement from the Turkish border to north of Sarajevo. Cutting that "road" has been one of the Bosnian Serbs' principal, and thus far successful, war aims. During the April 1994 Gorazde crisis, which saw the first application of American military force in the war, few observers took note of the real Muslim objective: to break out of Gorazde across the nearby Bosnian/Yugoslav border to Sandzak. If they had been successful, the Muslims would not only have restored an important lifeline to the east, but the Yugoslav army would have been forced to react, perhaps triggering the long-sought-after American intervention, the Muslims' only hope of victory.

As it turned out, despite massive preparations, the Muslims suffered another humiliating defeat. The American intervention, consisting of a couple of air strikes, was politically significant but far short of what many observers hoped for. Still, for reasons that are not entirely clear, the United States is unambiguously and consistently aiding the Muslim effort all along "Allah's Road." The Istanbul publication *Aydinlik* reported on May 21, 1994, that hundreds of Muslim youths from Sandzak are being secretly brought into Turkey, via FYROM, for commando training. "The project of training the Sandzak Muslims," it states, "is part of a plan to create 'a Muslim state in parts of Serbia and Montenegro.' This also complies with the views of [Bosnia's Muslim President Alija] Izetbegovic's party, which is active in Sandzak. It was the United States that put forward the plan to establish a Muslim state in Europe. Saudi Arabia is openly supporting it. Besides, Turkey's secret diplomacy in the Balkans is being financed by Saudi Arabia."

On February 14, 1994, the Sofia publication *Duma* reported on a visit by two American diplomats to the Bulgarian border region with Greece. According to *Duma*, their purpose was to help "draw together" Muslim communities and political

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movements on both sides of the border between the two predominantly Christian states, as part of the formation of a "Turkish axis between Bulgaria and Greece," connecting Turkey to FYROM. On May 31, the Sofia publication *Kontinent* discussed "the strong U.S. military presence in the Balkans during the last two years and the unconcealed and increasing appetites of the United States in the peninsula." Among the specifics are a buildup of American military assets in Albania; additions to "the U.S. 'blue helmet' contingent" in FYROM and their "gradual replacement of Scandinavian troops" (this is a reference to the 300 Americans sent there, ostensibly as U.N. peacekeepers, actually as a tripwire, by our Razorback Rommel in 1993; their number has quietly doubled); suspicious violations of Bulgaria's airspace; and political manipulations within Bulgaria. "If those of our statesmen who still nurture pro-American feelings have not yet realized our geostrategic situation," warns the *Kontinent* observer, "I advise them to spend an hour or two perusing the map. The Balkans are not yet the [Persian] Gulf, although some people are very keen on their becoming so. One thing, we have no oil, and another, not all of us are yet inclined to become Muslims."

The respected and well-informed London publication *Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy* points in its October/November 1993 issue to many of the same elements:

> Despite the lack of any clear agreement on Balkan policy between the competing U.S. foreign policy power centers . . . the United States appears to be establishing economic, political and military advisers and bases throughout the Southern Balkans. The U.S. clearly sees this region as within its sphere of influence. In Albania, U.S. economic advisers are positioned in most, if not all, government departments, and there is a large number of military training officers. U.S. warships enforcing U.N. sanctions [against Serbia] are based at Vlore. Following an extensive visit to Albania last month, a British journalist commented that "Albania has come to resemble an American training academy. The poorest country in Europe is fast becoming an American colony." The same picture holds true for Bulgaria and, under the pretext of peacekeepers, hundreds of U.S. troops have moved into [FYROM]. They are equipped with sophisticated weapons systems which exceed those necessary for a normal peacekeeping role.

The massive pressure of American policy on the states of the south Balkans is unmistakable; the only thing missing is a coherent explanation for it. Bulgaria and FYROM, two states with every reason to oppose increased Muslim influence, have seen little choice but to cooperate. Bulgaria, burned badly by past attempts to annex FYROM, has today sought refuge in its image as a Good International Citizen, which in practice means doing everything the "international community" demands of it. The Greeks, entirely missing the point (as usual), have chosen to represent their legitimate concerns about FYROM's eventual revanchist designs on Greek territory as an ethnic copyright dispute concerning the name "Macedonia" and FYROM's Hellenistic flag. Consequently, Greece has been almost entirely unable to contain the growing Muslim power that seeks to cut it off from Serbia, Bulgaria, and the rest of Europe, and has alienated potential allies among FYROM's Slavs. This confused orientation reflects modern Greece's perennial perplexity about its identity: whether it is, at its core, Byzantine, Orthodox Christian, and *Romaikos* or European, neopagan, and *Ellinikos*; the Greece of Constantine Porphyrogenitos or of Pericles, of icons or of statuary. At the same time, Athens' stock in Washington steadily slides, as ominous warnings are increasingly heard about the undue influence on America's foreign policy exerted by the "Greek Lobby"—from quarters with a selective sense of outrage on behalf of the United States' wounded sovereignty. Finally, the health of the aging socialist Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, Greece's answer to Ted Kennedy, is not expected to hold out much longer, with governmental collapse and a possible "Evita Perón" problem involving his trophy wife, former Olympic Airways hostess "Mimi," certain to follow his departure.

For its part, the only line Bulgaria absolutely will not cross would be a demand to let Turkish troops enter its territory or airspace. FYROM is in an even weaker position, sailing between the Scylla of "multiethnic democracy" and the Charybdis of Macedonian nationalism. The government of Kiro Gligorov, past communist *apparatchik* and current FYROM president, has chosen Scylla, which has meant not only utter subservience to the American/Turkish, East/West axis but constant and unsuccessful attempts to appease the Muslim minority domestically. This appeasement has reached the point that the Gligorov government all but ignored a plot uncovered last year by Muslim organizations to import arms from Albania in preparation for a secessionist revolt. "If a binational Macedonia isn't created, we Albanians have two choices: Either we can accept assimilation or go to war," says the leader of one group. Islamic community leaders long demanded a census in FYROM, but most Muslims boycotted the one conducted in mid-1994, possibly not trusting the Slavs to count them fairly, or perhaps out of a desire not to tip their demographic hand too soon. Outbreaks of violence between Slav and Muslim youths have become increasingly common, and there are fears that in the event of large-scale disturbances Skopje could not cope.

Here, in an ethnic implosion that ends FYROM's efforts to manage a model state in the New World Order, is how the United States could get into the Balkans for real. Mob violence between the FYROM communities would trigger an Albanian insurgency, and Albania and Turkey would support it. FYROM's Slavs would have no choice but to ask for Serbian backing, leading to an Albanian-Serbian war that would center on Kosovo. From there, Greece's participation would be all but inevitable, in support of longtime ally Serbia and a predictable ethnic Greek revolt in southern Albania/northern Epirus. Turkey would take action against Greece, possibly including direct moves in the Aegean and against Cyprus. Bulgaria would try, but probably fail, to stay out of it, ultimately deciding to help FYROM's Slavs and maybe chase out some of its own ethnic Turks. Russia would provide political and military support to Athens and Belgrade. The United States, by virtue not only of its tripwire in FYROM but its overall regional network of political and military assets, would be deeply committed to the Albanian/Turkish side in the Third Balkan War. Besides the local consequences, we would then have the makings of a sharp American/Russian confrontation. It is no accident that the groups in the United States most keen on American military involvement in the Balkans are, if possible, even more Russophobic than Serbophobic.

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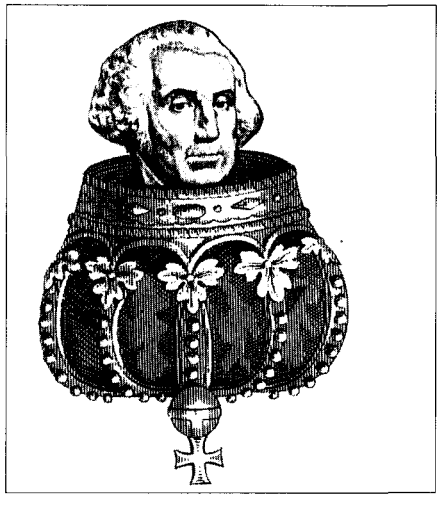
A Setting Sun

by Mark G. Malvasi

"I would rather that the people should wonder why I wasn't President than why I am."

—Salmon P. Chase



Igor Kopelnitsky

The American Presidency: An Intellectual History
by Forrest McDonald
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas; 528 pp., $29.95

◆

Contra Ecclesiastes, the American presidency was something new under the sun. With no explicit precedents to guide them, the Founding Fathers constructed the office and defined its parameters by analogy. In his richly detailed, elegantly written, and closely reasoned book, Forrest McDonald undertakes to investigate the origins and development of this unique institution.

As the foremost student of the Constitution, McDonald boasts an intimate knowledge of the intellectual world of the Founders. The English monarchy, he shows, constituted the most immediate and accessible representation of executive power for them. After 1776, they had to "devise an institutional substitute for the crown." Yet McDonald is careful to point out that by 1776 the English had fashioned a stable constitutional monarchy that provided the ordered liberty Americans sought. Americans traced the progress of limited monarchy not only in their examination of English history, but in their study of the English legal and constitutional tradition.

During the 18th century, Americans—especially those who read for the bar—routinely consulted the commentaries of Henry Bracton, Sir John Fortescue, Sir Edward Coke, Matthew Hale, and Sir William Blackstone. They did not wholly abandon their English antecedents even after they had won independence from the British Empire. They did not have to.

Their emphasis on law and custom marked the Founding Fathers as exceedingly prudent and conservative men. Skeptical, even disdainful, of abstract theorems and speculative calculations, they nevertheless found in political philosophy a second important source for their idea of the presidency. Ancient thinkers, McDonald declares, contributed nothing to the Framers' understanding of the executive; instead, the Americans began with Niccolò Machiavelli, who wrote *The Prince* as a practical manual for rulers. In addition, they had at least a passing, if at times imprecise, familiarity with the work of Thomas Hobbes, Robert Filmer, John Locke, Sir William Temple, Viscount Bolingbroke, Montesquieu, David Hume, and Jean-Louis De Lolme. But John Dickinson articulated the prevailing sentiment among his peers when he said, "Experience must be our guide. Reason may mislead us." History, not philosophy, would determine the contours of the American presidency.

Biblical, Greek and Roman, and English history each offered the Founding Fathers insight into the nature, evolution, and dangers of executive power. Moreover, they applied the lessons of history to their own experience as colonists, revolutionaries, and statesmen. Their education and their practical experience ill disposed them to vest unrestrained power in any branch of government, particularly the executive.

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At the same time, history and experience taught Americans that "safety and ordered liberty cannot exist without competent government and that government without executive authority is no government at all." Cautiously, they put aside their fears and suspicions of power, and, in devising a new instrument of government, also invented a new chief executive office to administer it. Indispensable to those proceedings was George Washington. "It is no exaggeration to say," writes McDonald, "that Americans were willing to venture the experiment with a single national republican chief executive only because of their unreserved trust in George Washington." What was it about Washington's character and demeanor that inspired the almost boundless admiration and irrepressible devotion of his countrymen?

Washington's military accomplishments during the Revolution established his reputation; his political career secured it. Intuitively understanding the significance of the presidency, he saw that his every action fixed a precedent. He also recognized that his function as President was as much ceremonial as administrative. The constancy with which he fulfilled his obligations brought dignity to the office and respect for the new nation at home and abroad. Moreover, as McDonald discerns, Washington was the first great political actor in American history. As commander in chief during the Revolution, he engineered victory against overwhelming odds. After the fighting ended, he allayed the threat of insurrection among his subordinates, reminding them that he had "grown gray" and "almost blind" in the service of his country. To take up arms against it now would be an abomination. Relinquishing command of the Army to Congress constituted an integral act in Washington's political drama. Here was no Sulla, no Caesar, no Cromwell who would forsake republican liberty. Washington's disinterested love of country, McDonald concludes, enabled his contemporaries at least to contemplate instituting the office of President.

McDonald asserts that since Washington retired from public life in 1796, "the caliber of people who have served as chief executive has declined erratically but persistently." Subsequent Presidents from Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, and Abraham Lincoln in the 19th century to Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan in the 20th have made definitive though not always salutary contributions to the presidency. Despite this troubled history, McDonald contends that "the presidency has been responsible for less harm and more good, in the nation and in the world, than perhaps any other secular institution in history." He may be right. Compared with the upheaval that often attends political change in other nations, the transition from one President to another in the United States represents a model of stability, decorum, order, and sanity. But there is more to good government than the peaceful transfer of power. McDonald's judicious analysis of what the presidency has become in our time belies or at least raises serious questions about his conclusion.

Throughout his study, McDonald registers the vast and growing divergence between popular expectations and presidential accomplishments. Quite simply, Presidents can no longer live up to the image of themselves that they and the media concoct. They can no longer keep all—or even most—of the promises that they make to win elections. But the problem, as McDonald recognizes, goes deeper. Americans have never decided what kind of President and, indeed, what kind of government they want. The enduring dilemma of American political life remains that we as a people are no more content with a strong executive and an energetic national government than with a weak executive and an enervated national government. McDonald notes that "Polls taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion since the 1930's have reflected two unchanging popular attitudes toward the presidency, namely that the people want strong, activist presidents and that they distrust and fear strong, activist presidents." Such indecision ensures recurrent ambiguity in defining the presidency. The expanded responsibilities but diminished capacities of the office have only intensified the afflictions of modern Presidents. Now no longer merely the chief executive of the United States, the President leads the free world. The persona of world leader entails imposing burdens that few can bear for long.

To make policy, for example, the President must sift through a bewildering assortment of information that frequently produces not clarity, coherence, and precision, but confusion, disarray, and turmoil. To complicate matters, presidential advisors, skilled at manipulating the internal politics of the White House to their own advantage or at guaranteeing the President "deniability," often distort or withhold crucial information. The real wonder is not that Presidents appear perplexed, but that they execute any of the functions of their office.

Finally, campaigns for the presidency have become more expensive, more demanding, more embittered, and more humiliating. Indeed, McDonald's penetrating inquiry suggests essential questions about the nature and future of democracy in an age when presidential contests have come to be based not only on popularity but on publicity. The quest for popularity in an increasingly democratic political culture may have engendered appeals to common fears, prejudices, and hatreds. But the advent of publicity has virtually drained American political and civic life of values and standards, reason and restraint, taste and judgment. Civilization and democracy no longer seem compatible.

As a result, Presidents do not command the respect that they once enjoyed as a matter of course. Without that respect, they are finished. "It is not enough to govern well," McDonald wisely argues. "The president must also seem presidential." He must exhibit integrity, compassion, and mastery of self, rivals, and circumstances. He must inspire confidence. If he fails to do so, he will almost certainly be ineffective, whatever his qualifications for office. As McDonald insists, "the image . . . determines the reality."

As fanciful and shifting images have come not only to determine but largely to displace substantive reality, it seems improbable that the American presidency will continue to work more good than harm in the nation and in the world. The character of the individuals who now occupy the office and the daunting requirements of the job will continue to produce ambivalent results calculated to feed the vague but growing discontent of the American people. The presidency will thus persist in its slow decline into impotence and incompetence, and then shall the realm of Albion's seed come to great confusion.

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What Atheists Know

by Kenneth R. Craycraft, Jr.

"When tenderness is detached from the source of tenderness, its logical outcome is terror. It ends in forced labor camps and in the fumes of the gas chamber."
—Flannery O'Connor

The Politics of Virtue: Is Abortion Debatable?
by Elizabeth Mensch and Alan Freeman
Durham: Duke University Press;
264 pp., $14.95

Fullness of Faith: The Public Significance of Theology
by Michael J. Himes and Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M.
New York: Paulist Press;
224 pp., $14.95

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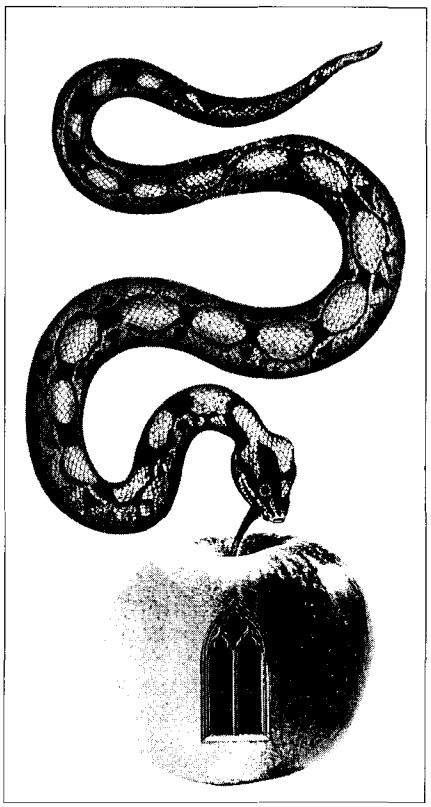
In response to the charge of obsession with a "single issue," pro-life activists contend that the abortion debate is really paradigmatic. As Joseph Sobran suggested several years ago, "The debate about abortion is really the kind of debate America shies away from: a debate about what man is, and what society should be." That is, abortion is a surrogate for the larger, and more abstract, question of the nature and purpose of human existence. When pro-life and pro-abortion advocates scream at one another, they use the image of abortion, but they are really arguing about a whole host of issues, such as marriage, sexuality, euthanasia, religious commitment, freedom, and "rights." As it turns out, one's stance on abortion is a highly reliable indicator of where one stands on these and on other moral, cultural, and political problems.

But the abortion argument is paradigmatic of another, more serious problem: the incommensurability of the moral schemes and paradigms each side invokes. Words like "freedom," "choice," "life," "human," "justice," even "male" and "female," when used by the two sides, are barely more than alphabetical accidents. The content each side ascribes to these words renders them different symbols, pointing to different and mutually exclusive moral "realities." Thus, the fundamental question at issue is not "what value does one ascribe to human life?" but "to which moral-linguistic community do you belong?"



Igor Kopelnitsky

But the problem gets even stickier for those on the pro-life side. For while they certainly do not intend to invest their words with the same meanings as the pro-abortionist rhetoric has, in large part the pro-lifers have lost the game by conceding the legitimacy of that language in the first place. Or, more precisely, the pro-life side has allowed itself to be seduced by a rationality detrimental to its case. When it adopts this rationality, but still tries to cling to moral notions foreign to it, it makes coherence *literally* impossible—with the result that the shouting gets louder and the shooting more common.

This double jeopardy is best illustrated by the phrase "right to life," so often used by the antiabortion side. The pro-abortion argument is that the fetus can legitimately be considered an intruder on the rights of the woman who must carry it to term. If she so decides, this violation of her rights can be seen as qualitatively similar to a physician deliberately injecting a virus or bacterium that causes prolonged, chronic disability. No one would deny that she has the "right" to rid herself of this virus by any medical means at her disposal. So too the fetus, as an intruder upon a woman's personal autonomy, is subject to her right not to be so burdened. The pro-life side thinks it can trump this argument by defending the "rights" of the unborn child. The rights of the mother—so the argument goes—end when their exercise results in the death of another "rights-bearing" individual. But by granting the legitimacy of a rationalistic scheme based upon the recognition of "rights," they have rendered their argument incoherent and lost the battle.

The argument from "right" implies that the fetus and mother are autonomous individuals with moral claims *against* one another. When pro-lifers argue that the fetus has a right to life, they simply cannot avoid the implication that this right is exercised as an intrusive claim *against* another person, a claim the other person has the *greater* right to deny. For the fetus to "claim" its right, it must positively transgress the woman's rights of autonomy and self-expression. But since in any rights-based argument the strong presumption of justice is always *against* the active trans-

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gressor and *for* the passive victim, the woman has the greater right to rid herself of the transgressor by whatever means are necessary.

The grand and vicious irony is that when the pro-life side rails against *Roe* v. *Wade*, it accepts the moral rationality that necessarily leads to the conclusion of *Roe* and its companion decision *Doe* v. *Bolton*: that a woman has the right to terminate a pregnancy for any reason she deems sufficient, up to the moment of birth. The pro-life side cannot win the debate by framing its argument against *Roe* in this way, since this moral rationality was designed specifically for the conclusions to which it leads.

The problem is that the pro-life side wants to communicate its opposition to abortion in terms that the pro-abortion side will accept. (This desire is decidedly not reciprocal; pro-abortionists have no desire to convince anyone of anything, which is, ironically, another reason why they are winning the war. As the bumper sticker says, "Abortion: On Demand, Without Apology.") But in their attempt to make themselves intelligible, they must adopt the moral-linguistic scheme that ineluctably leads to radical pro-abortion conclusions. That is, in their pursuit of a universalist, inclusionist rationality accessible and reasonable to everyone, the pro-life side succumbs to the highly particular, exclusionist rationality of secular Enlightenment liberalism.

Thus, Elizabeth Mensch and Alan Freeman's *The Politics of Virtue: Is Abortion Debatable?* is less an exploration of the subtitled question than an intelligent and convincing explanation of its negation. The problem is not the difficulty of getting the two sides to talk dispassionately to one another, but rather the lack of the *sine qua non* of real debate: a shared moral rationality and language. "Our goal is not to advance one side or the other in the abortion debate," Mensch and Freeman explain at the outset, "but rather to explore whether we are necessarily stuck with the grim and destructive fact of moral incommensurability." The authors hope their book will be seen "in the service of replacing stark incommensurability with something closer to mutually respectful dialogue." But try as they might, and as loath as they are to admit it, their book is testament to the fact that, indeed, abortion is the supreme symbol of mutually intolerant modes of moral and political discourse in America today.

If this is ever to be overcome—especially from the antiabortion side—it will not be in the current terms of the "debate," nor will it be in service to a universalistic morality. The only way for the antiabortion side to "win" is for it to abandon all hope of convincing the pro-abortionists on their own terms, and to reaffirm a *better* moral rationality, which would never accept abortion as a viable means of birth control or as a legitimate expression of a woman's moral being. It must give up on the supposed moral universalism that has, ironically, led to the highly fractious and subjective individualism of current American moral and political debate.

Mensch and Freeman do an excellent job of accounting for this irony in their discussion of "natural law" in 20th century political discourse. Often mistaking a Kantian epistemology for a truly Thomistic one, many Catholic scholars have aggravated the situation by appealing not to a Thomistic dialectic of natural law and revelation, but rather to a lowest-common-denominator—or *universal*—rationalist moral system to which every human could subscribe, regardless of the moral or cultural community he represented. The problem is that this appeal to universalism ends up by divorcing morality from the authority of tradition, which finally leads to rampant individualist subjectivism and relativism. If sheer reason, unaided and untutored, is the basis of ethics, then every individual is his own moral universe. The appeal to particular, normative moral traditions, embedded in authoritative rational communities, is a violation of universalism and thus of individualism as well.

There have been many contemporary attempts to make the Roman Catholic Church relevant to the prevailing political and moral ideologies. For in order to speak in supposed "universalist" terms to the prevailing moral and political culture, Christian theologians have been all too eager to embrace foreign moral languages in place of their own—a subject which brings us back to the contradictory aspect of "right to life" arguments. Alleged appeals to natural law or (more commonly) to "natural rights" are, in effect, appeals to particularistic moral languages which have been highly successful in selling a very seductive bill of goods. When theologians attempt to "translate" the language of Christianity into the language of prevailing rights arguments, they effectively abandon any standing to criticize the ideologies that spring from these concepts. As Mensch and Freeman note, many denominations and theologians offer "no explanation for their actions except an increasingly secular political vocabulary of social justice." The "increasingly secular vocabulary of clergy, while not necessarily offensive, hardly differentiated the church from liberal secular culture generally." Theology thus is rendered incapable of saying "more than what atheists already

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know." "This problem of translation reveals the extent to which the church/state dilemma . . . is a problem of epistemology itself," the authors explain.

Thinkers engaged in reasserting the fact of religion as a legitimate source of moral knowledge in the public arena insist that it find some conceptually neutral language in which to express this knowledge. Mensch and Freeman cite Richard John Neuhaus, who wants the believer and nonbeliever to "engage one another in a shared world of discourse." But there are at least two problems with Neuhaus's solution. First, it would give the nonbeliever absolutely no stake in trying to find a "moral Esperanto" (to borrow a phrase from Princeton philosopher Jeffrey Stout). Why should he abandon the secular political and moral discourse that works just fine, thank you, in achieving his political and moral goals? Second, and more importantly, such attempts at "translation" as Neuhaus and others advocate always fail because they allow the secular moral culture to be the judge of what is "rational" and what is not. The reason why secularists and Christians do not communicate is precisely because they do live in different "worlds of discourse." When it comes to the question of whose rationality will prevail, the theologians always blink.

They blink because their nerve fails; not to grant secular moral and political culture its role as the arbiter of rationality is to risk sounding sectarian, and thus becoming irrelevant to public discourse. The result, of course, is that the church thereby "relevantizes" itself into irrelevance; and *Fullness of Faith* is an example of just such a failure of nerve. On its surface, the book looks like a studied attempt to avoid this tendency. The authors, Michael J. Himes and Kenneth R. Himes, O.F.M., want to show how such distinctly Christian doctrines as Original Sin, the Holy Trinity, and the Incarnation of God in Christ can take publicly significant forms in American political discourse. But *only after they are translated into terms that a secular liberal democratic polity can accept*. Or, to be more exact, only by showing how these doctrines are easily metamorphosed into good Democratic political theory.

In a classic case of the political tail wagging the theological dog, Himes and Himes want to join in the "quest . . . for a Catholic social theory which can support and enrich liberal democracy yet oppose the individualism and myth of self-interest which historically has undergirded liberal institutions." Thus, they go to great pains to show that the Trinity calls us away from the radical individualism of Hobbes and Locke. But they spin away from those philosophers only to go reeling into the arms of Rousseau, the champion of positive rights.

The authors' goal is not to suggest distinctly Christian critiques of existing political and social realities, but rather to show how the realities of which they approve can be undergirded by certain understandings of Christian doctrine, an agendum that turns theological method on its head. They begin by investigating the social and political policies which they like, and then show how God likes them, too. For example, the authors wish to command a certain brand of "communitarianism," as opposed to individualism. But in so doing, they ignore two important things. The first is that communitarianism is a variety of liberalism, beginning with the same basic anthropological presuppositions: liberalism with a smiling face. But, more importantly, the authors' need to translate Christianity into political terms is the result of their failure to take seriously the fact that the Church is its own political system, with its own grammar, rationality, and language. Their method is to show not what a politics of, say, the Incarnation should look like, but rather why the Incarnation undergirds the legitimacy of political patriotism. Rather than spell out the distinct ecclesial politics of the Trinity, the authors tell us how the Trinity is really a metaphor for universal human rights.

The authors' purpose is a noble and important one. They want to show that "the Catholic theological tradition and its consequent social teaching offer a distinctive vision of human life, human community, the goals of a just society." But they do not adequately consider the possibility that the Church does not merely *offer* a vision of these things, but rather is a unique instantiation of a particular way of human living; instead, they offer distinctly theological words and phrases as a means of substantiating *another* political reality, and, in so doing, they allow this other reality to transform theological language into a "universal" political language that any "rational" person can accept. But what, then, is the point? Secular politics is not interested in any theological justification of its existence. And if theology merely serves to show how secular politics has been right all along, why do we *need* theology? Obversely, public theology, rather than presenting the church as a distinct political society which calls all other politics into question, teaches Americans to be good (communitarian) liberals.

When such a transformation occurs, theology quickly loses its ability to stand as a prophetic voice against all other politics but its own. It forgets how to say "No!" When theology sees itself as serving a broader public good—noble as that might sound—it must render this service in ways that the broader public will find acceptable. That is to say, it must sacrifice itself to secularity for the purpose of universality. For instance, it reminds us that we ought to be self-giving and compassionate, yet we soon forget why. It tell us to be loving, but fails to explain the boundaries or parameters of that love. It tells us to be tender, but when tenderness is changed into some mythical universalist ethic, cut away from the source of tenderness, we soon learn that it allows us to kill rather than to suffer (or to suffer suffering). It is no small irony that law professors Mensch and Freeman appear to recognize this truth more clearly than theologians Himes and Himes. c

LIBERAL ARTS

TRANSGENDERISM

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the city's Board of Supervisors voted in December to make it illegal for employers, landlords, and public officials to discriminate against members of the "transgender community." An editorial in the newspaper complained that San Francisco had waited too long to join Santa Cruz, Seattle, and Minneapolis, which already accord special legal protection to "transsexuals." The editorial concluded by quoted Terence Hallinan, the chief proponent of the measure: "We are creating a civil right and it will affect attitudes all over America."

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Sins of Omission

by John Lofton

The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind
by Mark A. Noll
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans;
288 pp., $19.99

◆

The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind is that, as Mark Noll puts it, "there is not much of an evangelical mind"; that, despite all their other virtues, "American evangelicals are not exemplary for their thinking, and they have not been for several generations"; and that, at a popular level, "modern American evangelicals have failed notably in sustaining serious intellectual life." Writing as "a wounded lover," he adds: "The general impact of Christian thinking on the evangelicals of North America, much less on learned culture as a whole, has been slight . . . there is a long, long way to go."

This is, alas, true. But the problem Professor Noll identifies is far worse than a scandal: it is a sin. When our Lord was asked what was the great commandment in the law, He replied, quoting Deuteronomy 6:5: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:36-37). And in II Corinthians 10:5, Paul commands Christians to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Thus, the widespread failure of Christians to think Christianly—according to what the Scripture says—is a violation of God's Law, which is sin. And we see this sinful failure all around us virtually every time a prominent Christian speaks out about anything. In an address last September in Washington, D.C., to the "Christian Coalition" he founded, Pat Robertson told his audience (to a reported standing ovation) that all his group wants to see is "the kind of government and values we had during the Eisenhower administration of the 1950's." Really? The Lord Jesus Christ died a hideous, painful death on the Cross, and millions of Christian martyrs have been subsequently murdered, for the purpose of reestablishing the great Christian Republic of Ike?—the Eisenhower who, as President, on December 22, 1952, remarked: "Our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply religious faith, *and I don't care what it is*." (Emphasis mine).

Professor Noll says that by an evangelical "life of the mind" he means "the effort to think like a Christian—to think within specifically a Christian framework—across a whole spectrum of modern learning, including economics and political science, literary criticism and imaginative writing, historical inquiry and philosophical studies, linguistics and the history of science, social theory and the fine arts." He adds: "The scandal of the evangelical mind is a scandal from whichever direction it is viewed. It is a scandal arising from the historical experience of an entire culture. It is a scandal to which the shape of evangelical institutions has contributed. Most of all, it is a scandal because it scorns the gifts of a loving God." Indeed. And I have seen such scorn exhibited—as Howard Cosell used to say—up close and personal. At a Heritage Foundation conference in 1990, at which Fred Barnes of the *New Republic* defended "Big Government conservatism" as a viable new strategy for the right, I asked Barnes (an evangelical Christian) two simple questions: What, specifically, does your faith have to do with your views regarding civil government? And: From your Christian perspective, are there specific things the federal government is demanding that ought not to be rendered to Caesar? Here is Barnes's answer in its entirety: "Well, let's see. I was a conservative before I was a Christian and my views haven't changed since becoming a Christian. So, uhh, uhh, are there things the government does now that, well, uhh, uhh, I certainly don't favor some of the grants by the NEA—which if Bush has his way will continue. That's one example. But, no. Do I, in thinking about politics, and what I'm for or against, get out the Bible and read it? No."

Some answer from a Christian. Barnes's reply was delivered with an expression of utter disgust. I remember wondering as I left this gathering: if Barnes, a Christian, doesn't read the Bible, God's Word, to learn what he's for and against in politics, what *does* he read? The *New Republic*, I suppose.

But things were not always thus. Professor Noll contrasts the modern, mindless evangelical Christian with the views of a true Christian thinker, John Calvin, who, he says, in combining a high view of God's sovereignty with an earnest appreciation of the human intellect, sought "to bring every aspect of life under the general guidance of Christian thinking, to have each question in life answered by a response from a Christian perspective." As a consequence of Calvin's influence, "Protestants were encouraged to labor as scientists so that their scientific work could rise to the praise of God," each exploration "showing forth His glory." And "at least some statesmen and theologians among the early Protestants carried on the same sort of enterprise with respect to government. They not only worked to make political and social organizations reflect the norms of justice they found in Scripture but also examined the contrasting rights of individuals, kings, and parliaments, and contributed to theories about democracy and the existence of republics. In general, they did what they could to make life in society reflect the goodness of God." And there are, by God's grace, such men today who "stand in the gap" (Ezekiel 22:30) and continue John Calvin's legacy, men who are attempting to develop a Christian mind and apply God's Word to every area of thought and life. But they fail to receive the credit they deserve from Professor Noll. For example, he only says of Dr. R.J. Rushdoony—head of the Chalcedon Foundation with which I am associated—and of the late Cornelius Van Til, a professor of apologetics at the Westminster Theological Seminary,

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that as Theonomists or Reconstructionists they tried to offer "practical proposals for public life" by "insisting on carefully formulated theological foundations for political action" pushing "toward a more self-conscious political reflection than is customary in the evangelical tradition." But this is an inexcusable understatement. Much more needs to be said of these men and their influence. Both Rushdoony (whom I have known personally for over 10 years) and Van Til (most of whose works I have read) are giants among the pygmy Christian thinkers of today. Their works are truly seminal because they are solidly Biblical.

Professor Noll asks: "Can a Christian mind develop out of American evangelicalism?" His answer: "Based solely on 20th century historical precedent, it does not seem likely." Why not? Because "what is essential to Christianity is a profound trust in the Bible as pointing us to the Savior and for orienting our entire existence to the service of God. . . . The effort to think like a Christian is rather an effort to take seriously the sovereignty of God over the world He created, the lordship of Christ over the world He died to redeem, and the power of the Holy Spirit over the world He sustains each and every moment." Well, amen! But the leaders of the most prominent evangelical organizations—such as Ralph Reed, head of the Christian Coalition—seem not to have the slightest inkling that this is indeed the essence of the Christian mind. Reed has repeatedly stated, as he did on *Today* and *Good Morning America*, that his Christian faith is "personal and private" and that his group wants only to change "public policy," that his Coalition is "in effect, a League of Women Voters for people of faith." Yet as Scripture tells us, "faith which produces no Christian works is a dead faith" (James 2:26), a mindless faith, a scandalous faith, a sin. Our Lord Himself calls dead faith a "savorless salt," so useless it is not fit even for "the dunghill" (Luke 14:34-35).

John Lofton is editor and publisher of The Lofton Letter.

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Lucky Him

by J.O. Tate

The Anti-Egotist: Kingsley Amis, Man of Letters
by Paul Fussell
New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press; 224 pp., $23.00

The Russian Girl
by Kingsley Amis
New York: Viking Press; 296 pp., $22.95

◆

A wit and a fussbudget as well as a scholar, Paul Fussell is one of the best essayists and observers around. For personal as well as literary reasons, there is no one better qualified to undertake a study of the writings of Sir Kingsley Amis. They make a natural pair. Indeed, they have been friends for some years, though that very relationship may have something to do with the flaws in Fussell's study of Amis's books and mind.

Fussell has pointedly excluded Amis's best known productions, his novels. He wants to show us Amis as a man of letters, a poet, a critic, an essayist, an academic, an anthologist, a traveler, an explorer of the good life—and on the whole, this strategy is effective. After all, there is something to be said for a man who wrote *On Drink*, *Every Day Drinking* and *How's Your Glass?*, and Fussell says it. There is something to be said, too, for the editor of *The Golden Age of Science Fiction*, *The New Oxford Book of Light Verse*, *The Faber Popular Reciter*, and the author of books on science fiction, James Bond, and Rudyard Kipling. Fussell sees Amis as a moralist, an upholder of standards, an accessible craftsman, and a civic writer. He also sees him as a good poet, faithful to his calling, whose verses fill some of the vacuum left by the inroads of modernism and the collapse of culture in the sense in which it was known not so long ago. And in making these points, Fussell is quite successful.

What is neither successful nor sound, however, is Paul Fussell's critical acumen. Perhaps he became so caught up in the celebration that the celebration got scanted, which is odd for him. Since he does not say so, perhaps this is the place to say that not every thought that has emerged from the Amis font has been a worthy one. The sins of youth, such as Amis's sneering at *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and Jane Austen, seem now more dim-witted than naughty, and the goofy repetition of these embarrassments lends dignity to neither party. Furthermore, Fussell has so collapsed the distinction between the man and the writer that even as he insists on Amis's moral earnestness, he repeats passages in which Amis spitefully insulted people about private matters. The only mistake Fussell attributes to Amis is his support of NATO during the Cold War. With a friend like this—who repeats bad jokes that only worked the first time when the sun was over the yard-arm, and who thinks that liking Tchaikovsky is a moral accomplishment—Amis does not need any enemies. Even so, Fussell's remains a useful and insightful book about an indispensable man of letters.

An even better demonstration of Amis's abilities has been undertaken by Sir Kingsley himself, in the form of his latest novel. Most of Amis's novels are moral dramas cloaked in entertaining wit, satire, splenetic asides, and unfolding comedy. In that sense, they are traditional English novels evoking obvious comparisons. This latest one made me think of Jane Austen and Henry James. The drama or the melodrama is a test of perception, the story of what Richard Vaisey thinks, how he knows what he knows, and how his thinking is challenged and changed. Yet it is also the story of how on certain points of principle he refuses to change his mind.

The title, *The Russian Girl*, reminds us of earlier Amis titles, such as *Take a Girl Like You*; *Girl, 20*; and *Difficulties with Girls*. Why so many girls? The answer is that a girl can be an object of romance or of desire and, even more, a trial of epistemology and valorization, perhaps even a test of faith. This Russian girl, a poetaster named Anna Danilova, is a bit of a manipulator as well as a mysterious, possibly dangerous vagabond. Does one kind of fraud imply another? How do you know? The drama of the novel is how Vaisey makes up his mind.

He also has to decide a few things about his job, professing Russian in a brain-dead academy that has shot itself in the head, and about his wife, Cordelia, who is without doubt one of

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his most imposing Amisian creations since the unforgettable Margaret of *Lucky Jim*. Indeed, *The Russian Girl* seems to be a sort of middle-aged replay of that novel. In both, the protagonist is caught in the hell of the academy and twisted between two women. In both, he rejects the neurotic and escapes with the other. We cannot ignore the repeated comic resolution or blessing which implies that personal and even intellectual integrity can only be found outside university life.

The background of academic politics is not to be neglected—it is directly related to the ostensible personal crisis, reminding us of *Jake's Thing* and *Stanley and the Women*. The betrayal of standards and the invasion of the academic world by hostile and incapable aliens are the grounds of Vaisey's confrontation with the Russian girl, forcing him even to reconsider his policy of rejecting bad poetry. Who but Kingsley Amis, who believes that bad poetry is not as good as good poetry and that we can tell the difference, would dramatize such a distinction? Of this novel as of Amis's own poems, the reader can only say, as Fussell has indicated, "Thanks—I needed that."

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Brief Mentions

Serbia's Historical Heritage. *Edited by Alex N. Dragnich (New York: East European Monographs) 121 pp., $37.00.*

Under ordinary circumstances an American might safely ignore the tragic history of the Serbs, but as the conflict in the Balkans threatens, increasingly, to set off an international war, access to sound information becomes crucial. Alex Dragnich's many careful studies of the region should be near the top of anyone's list. His *Serbs and Croats: The Struggle in Yugoslavia* is the clearest exposition of the Yugoslav idea and its consequences, and this little volume (and its predecessor in this series, *The Saga of Kosovo*, 1984) provides a series of clear snapshots of who the Serbs are and why they cling so insistently to their traditions. This volume's contributors concentrate on several key periods of Serbian history: the Middle Ages, in which the Serbs crafted a brilliant Slavic variant on Byzantine civilization; the centuries after Kosovo and the Turkish conquest; the development of Serbian political traditions of self-rule and constitutional democracy; and the terrible ordeals of two world wars in which the Serbs lost as large a part of their population as any nation has lost in modern times. Every people has a story to tell, and some small nations, like the Irish, while they have failed at nation-building, have excelled in telling their stories. Like the Irish, the Serbs are a nation of singers and storytellers, and the essays collected in this volume go a long way toward explaining both their national pride and the cultural legacy they are just beginning to recover after five decades of war and communist rule.

—Thomas Fleming

Country Towns of Upstate New York. *By Bill Kauffman (Castine, Maine: Country Roads Press) 118 pp., $9.95.*

Bill Kauffman's latest book offers a detailed account of the history and culture of 12 rural communities in upstate New York. Blessed by prosperity and an independent-minded citizenry and relatively free from "gangsta" violence and government malfeasance, these towns are among the few remaining vestiges of the old American republic, which the author celebrates in this book. An eloquent, wise, and well-informed guide, Kauffman leads the reader through elegant mansions that once housed such celebrities as Cornelius Vanderbilt and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. He offers tours of bucolic retreats like Westfield, where wine-making is a long-established trade, and Seneca Falls, the site of the Women's Rights Convention of 1848. Quite apart from natural beauty, these communities boast citizens who possess the courage and integrity that characterized their revolutionary forebears. For example, when state officials selected an area in Allegany County as the site for a toxic waste dump, local citizens took up arms and drove the officials away. Some upstate New Yorkers have achieved international fame. James Fenimore Cooper grew up in Cooperstown, where his father served as a judge while the younger Cooper explored the outlying wilderness. Washington Irving, while visiting Kinderhook, whose citizens provided the inspiration for some of the characters in his work, fraternized with an aspiring politician named Martin van Buren. But despite their treasures, these country towns are not plagued by tourists, who, were they to come, would not find the "advantages" of modern life—shopping malls, fast-food restaurants. Gore Vidal once wrote that settlement had reduced the American countryside to "a cement desert bright with golden arches." Fortunately for upstate New York, Vidal's harsh generalization is not yet true.

—Michael Washburn

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LIBERAL ARTS

ECCLESIAL P.C.

Bishops both in this country and abroad continue to battle Pope John Paul II over the ordination of women in the Catholic Church. Congolese Bishop Ernest Kombo urged at an international synod of bishops meeting in Rome late last year that "God inspire the prophetic outlook that would consider naming women . . . to the most elevated posts of the hierarchy, as lay cardinals, if possible." A committee of American bishops agreed and recommended the next day the "removing [of all] masculine language from church textbooks." "In no way should these commitments be construed as 'ecclesial political correctness,'" said the bishops.

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Letter From Bosnia

by Momcilo Selic

From Beyond the Pale

◆

We saw them at dawn: a dozen men in ragged camouflage, lugging dull black weapons glinting like poised snakes. Their faces rugged like Arizona bluffs, dark brown or brick red, they moved without a sound, like the mist rolling out of the forest. Large and beefy, they stood around our campfire and smiled at us. A tall, lanky soldier looked at me and said, "Old man, what are you doing here, among all this rot, mud, and all these dead men, pretending they are still alive?"

His face, nut-brown and clean shaven, shone like the barrel of his M84. He leaned on his weapon and his eyes twinkled, blue, like two weirs. I must have smiled at him. After three days in the trenches, opposite Olovo, a Muslim town in Bosnia, my beard was a stubble, pepper-and-salt, and he had singled me out as an outlander. Kula, Joker, and even Savo Tushevlyak he knew from before. Small and wizened under his Serbian officer's cap, Savo Tushevlyak grinned at him, then at me, expecting my reply.

"And how old are you, yourself?" I asked the machine gunner, as he rolled a cigarette, slowly, like a man enjoying his leisure. His hands were large and gnarled, as he pulled at his buttermilk-colored, homemade woolen socks, to set them aright, before he looked at me again. Strong as an elk and shy as one, a true Romania Serb (i.e., a Serb from the old Roman province), he suddenly realized I was a guest. "I was born in 1948," he said, somewhat sheepishly, and I told him I was only two years older than he, but a city boy, to boot. The soldiers and the bunker crew laughed, and the Romania men squatted, or sat down among us, quiet as they came. "This is the time they usually make their try," said the major. A six-footer, he seemed somewhat smaller than his men and his face—urbane and tired—betrayed him as a town Serb, on his way toward my condition.

The sun shone through the pines in parallel shafts of grace, and the sky was clear like a mountain brook—no clouds came upon us but the forest was a cloud in itself: dark, moldy, cold as the inside of one of our gun emplacements.

"What you've got to watch out for is their rifle grenades, and their rocket launchers," said the major. He stepped close to me and sat upon the wooden bench by the fire, the plank groaning under him. A red-faced soldier, blue-eyed like the rest, never left his side, smiling all the while, like a neighbor. There must have been well over 200 raw-boned pounds of him, yet he looked as spare and tough as a warrior hewn out of oak or beech. "But then," said the major, picking at our fire with a stick, "we got the .50 caliber on the hill, and a tank close by, to make the 'Turks' suffer, should they rush your position."

That day the Muslims did not hit us, but on the next day they did: at Macak Hill they stormed our trenches, after a whole-day artillery barrage, but the Romanians of Sokolac held. Behind our backs, less than a mile as the crow flies, a battle raged while we kept watch over our section of the forest, forlorn, like hikers in a rainstorm. On Tomcat (Macak) Hill, the men of Hawktown (Sokolac) beat back the Muslims from Leadstone (Olovo), though some of our units to the left and to the right of them ran, panic-stricken at the thought of capture.

"This is for you," Savo Tushevlyak had said to me, the first day our squad came to the front. He gave me a black, ribbed hand grenade from his own stock, keeping the green, smooth one for himself. The grenade, of course, was not for me to throw at the "Turks" but to lie upon myself should the line break. We all have seen the corpses of our prisoners, either with our own eyes or on TV: eyes gouged out, lips, noses, and ears slit off, throats slashed, bellies cut open. Some of our men, Muslims and Croats tortured with blowtorches, while the lucky ones were axed or bludgeoned to death.

At Foca, they had roasted Kreza alive after impaling him on a spit, so that the Old Man had to shoot him himself, no one else having the guts—or the heart—to do it. Kreza's eyes had popped out but he could still beg his buddies to kill him, and the Old Man had obliged, crying like a baby. The Old Man was a Chetnik from somewhere around Nish, in Serbia, while the rest of the company were either volunteers or regular soldiers, but no one said a word when he took two Muslim prisoners and treated them the same way their compatriots had treated Kreza. "I guess," the Old Man said to me later, "the 'Turks' never did the same thing again, at least not to any of my men, or to any other Serbs near Foca, or anywhere else, for that matter."

The men sitting around our campfire, above Krivajevici near Olovo in Bosnia, would have all done the same as the Old Man, a Chetnik major from east of the Drina River. The Old Man was himself a peasant and a laborer, like them; he was a bricklayer while they were lumberjacks, poachers, husbandmen, and carpenters, but each of them could butcher a pig like someone else could dress a cutlet, no blood and sweat beyond the necessary. The Muslims, of course, hated pigs, for their own butchery was much more human-oriented, a true gift of the East.

After the Romanians from Jahorina left—a squad of giants on their way down our line—Markan came, his beard soft and brown, like his eyes. Markan was also a Chetnik (and a butcher in civilian life), but for the time being he served as our company commander, and we thanked God for it. Only a six-footer and somewhat lanky, Markan was a Sarajevo boy, like Savo Tushevlyak, like him also chased out of his home by the "multicultural, multiethnic, multiconfessional" government of Alija Izetbegovic, but he was an old hand at combat, so he smiled, like a bashful young girl.

We were expecting an attack, while the Jahorina men and Markan's attack platoon kept watch over us, ready to plug any breach in the hidden, deadly line of bunkers and trenches that we manned, the civilians and volunteers of Pale, and elsewhere. But, strictly speaking, no one was a civilian in Pale, the capital of Serb Bosnia. Just above Sarajevo, before the war a sleepy village, Pale was the place where the Serbs defeated some Germans at the beginning of World War II, and the furthest point reached by the Montenegrins, in their expedition against the Austro-Hungarians, at the start of World War I.

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World War III was what was happening right now, but only the Palians and Markan and the Jahorina soldiers knew it: not even my friends in Belgrade were aware of it, let alone anyone in Austria, England, or the States. Confident that destiny could be either outwitted or finessed away, they all tended to their business, like ants in an anthill in the path of a grader. God was breathing hard down our necks in that dark, mossy, dug-up forest, and there was lead on our minds, in our hearts, in our magazines, and in the barrels of our rifles. Lead for our enemies and lead for our souls, lead to write some more history with—a narrative of That Which Does Not Change.

"History," said Zharko Vidovitch, an aging Bosnian Serb friend of mine, "is the shape that God perceives us in, while change is what men (mostly fools) talk about, forgetting all about the molecular and subatomic to-and-fro in our own bodies!" Vidovitch, of course, had smiled when he said that, as he always smiled, a survivor of the Croat Jasenovac death camp in 1941. He had escaped from an SS work camp in Norway and made his way to Sweden, where he—a young, prewar communist—studied theology, but his beatific, gentle smile only underlined his knowledge that Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Leadstone were all outposts of the Devil, triumphant on his way toward his (and our) ruin. Vidovitch, I suppose, could not really believe in the futility—or the finality—of anything: after imprisonment in a communist jail (for having returned to Tito's Yugoslavia from the West), he had become an Orthodox Christian theologian, contemplative of the pitfalls we have dug for ourselves, our own worst enemies.

Markan, the butcher, had buried his father after the Muslims had murdered him at the beginning of the war (when Christianne Amanpour of CNN was pouring out her award-winning sob stories about the Serb bombardment and "strangling" of Sarajevo), but unlike Vidovitch, he was of military age and could fight back with more than mere words. For Markan's wisdom lay in the way he bounded down the hillside, like a large, quiet cat, silent in his rubber *opanci*. With his Serbian peasant's forage cap and the silver, doubleheaded Serb eagle on it, his peasant footgear (*opanci*—somewhat like moccasins) only emphasized his kinship with the soil. Markan sported no knives, bandoliers, or grenades, only a well-worn automatic rifle; he was a walking, breathing statement that the "Turks" could but die, for all the need he—or the woods, or even Leadstone itself—had of them.

Markan could have remained in Sarajevo and shared the fate of some of its remaining Serbs: spat upon, bullied, hounded, or murdered by their former friends, neighbors, and compatriots (no one was more "Yugoslav" before this war than Bosnian Muslims), Sarajevo Serbs served only as Izetbegovic's token Christians, in a state sponsored by world Islam and underwritten by Western renegades, similar to the "Frankish" gunmakers who cast the cannon with which Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror had taken Constantinople.

Markan, however, knew no history, he only lived it, faithful to his forebears. For him, his father, and his father's father, all the way back to the 15th century, despite all efforts by men who would disguise depravity as freedom of choice, there never was any way out of the obligations of *his* manhood and *his* identity: others could turn infidel out of fear or in search of profit, but the Markovitchi could but remain the *same*, a part of that personal history that Zharko Vidovitch talked about, when he smiled, remembering all his losses.

Vidovitch's father was killed in World War II by Croat and Muslim *Ustase*—the fathers and grandfathers of today's Croat and Muslim combatants—and his only son and three other nationally conscious Serb youths were killed in a suspicious automobile "accident" shortly before this war, yet Vidovitch knew that nothing had ever been different: his father, a large, corpulent hero of the Salonika Front during World War I, was butchered like a hog because he was a Serb and an official of the "Yugoslav" government, and that also was history, so far allowable only to the nations of the West in their might, glory, and vanity, but never to us, their Balkan ancestors.

For the Irish, among others, had come from "Greek Scythia," the Celts in general had gone elsewhere from Bosnia after sacking Delphi, and the Goths had first crossed the Danube before lashing out over the Dnieper, or the Rhine. The men of Jahorina, Serbs of the Romania Mountain, citizens of the Pale, the first Lygians of Gibbon (that is, of Tacitus, Ptolemy, and others), had long ago abandoned their screaming night attacks, but during the day, dressed in camouflage uniforms and armed with fire-sticks, they kept the spark alive, the living measure of the European man's power and valor, which both built and destroyed Rome, Berlin, and Byzantium, after having founded and sacked Troy and Mycenae.

Romania, of course, was a latter-day name, only two thousand years old. The Mountain was huge, like Durmitor (The Sleeping Tower) in Montenegro, home of gods and heroes whose name had become Serb, as had mine. *Lygii*, or *Luzhani* (the men of Lugh, or *lug*, the forest people, the *Lusatians*) were still maintaining their shape in the eyes of God, the same way their huge, sinewy, powerful limbs retained their savage (though bridled) fury, their blood and all its biological and other servomechanisms patching their hideous wounds, opened up by shrapnel, bullets, shells, rockets, NATO bombs, and—worst of all—by lies, heaped thick upon them, like a snowstorm before a Muslim attack.

The Romanians fired their rifle grenades from their shoulders, disdaining to dig the butts of their weapons into the ground or lash the straps around their upper arms to lessen the recoil. For all the screams of "*Allah akbar*!" around them, they kept silent, answering only with lead, like a singing palisade. The Pale was being threatened, and they, the frontiersmen, could but hold it—the country beyond the pale was good only for Latins, Turks, or Krauts, and they gave not a hoot for such a dominion, respecting the Almighty's wish. Serb land was the reclaimed country of Lugh, the god of arts and promise, while Krautland, or Croatland, could groan under its people, like an overburdened raft, upon a mire.

The Muslims, I felt, were a disease, and claiming they were the same as us—or the same as Americans, for that matter—was an outrage, much the same as talking of the Koran as an equivalent of our Bible. If the Koran—a Classics Illustrated version of our creed—was the peer of the Old and the New Testament, then Romania Serbs were the same as Bushmen, or Hottentots, and their blue, green, or brown eyes held the same promise of doom and despair as the besotted, frantic eyes of Western burghers, whose only hope lay in their possessions. Of course, after the first four years of

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this war, Bosnian Serbs possessed nothing but their own selves, their families, kin, friends, and their *history*, always an awful shape upon God's Earth, a tough, thrashing entity stretched through the Time of the Short Duration, recalling Troy, Athens, Singidunum (Celtic Belgrade), a Rome whose Coliseum remained a stony shell, only dimly reminiscent of its true shape and glory, like a rotten rib cage of a once mighty brave.

Wearing homespun and camouflage, Slavko Markovitch, Markan, smiled at us and disappeared into the forest, like a true Lusatian. *Lug*, the forest, took him in, his brown beard and mustache mingling with its moss and pine needles, while the .50 caliber on the hill opened up, like a rattling hailstorm upon a tin shack.

Behind our backs, Tomcat Hill shook and the Muslims lost: it took the Spaniards 700 years to drive them out, and thus reach *their* history, and greatness—we still had, if need be, a hundred years to go, before succumbing to AIDS, to forced and fake compassion, to universal and phony equality, the murder of justice in favor of legality, the substitution of contract for oath or vow, to the eradication of family, kith, kin, and friendship in favor of the One Whose Name is Legion.

For Savo Tushevlyak, whose mother had died for want of drugs (she had Parkinson's Disease, in controllable form, but that was before the embargo), there was nothing but a wild, aching expectation of a return to Sarajevo—*his* Sarajevo—from which he had escaped in the spring of 1992, after having been stopped by a Muslim patrol. Then, Savo's mother was still alive, and he, dressed in suit and tie, was asked to show his papers by snickering men in shoddy clothes, armed with Kalashnikovs. "Savo," a militiaman read out, and an obese man looked at him long and hard from the shadows of an apartment-house entrance. Pondering his fate, he waved him on with his fat index finger, saying nothing, and Tushevlyak continued on his way, feeling the oncoming bullet between his shoulder blades.

There was no bullet, however, but "a man lives as long as he wishes, while only a fool lives until he dies," goes a Serb proverb. So Savo Tushevlyak sent his mother and father to Lukavica to stay with some family, while he ran through the Muslim lines, past the armed guards put there by Alija Izetbegovic to prevent anyone—Muslim, Croat, and Serb alike—from leaving his "multiconfessional, multiethnic, multicultural" paradise. Alija Izetbegovic, and Haris Silajdzic, and Ejup Ganic, and Muhamed Sacirbey (once upon a time, a *Sacirbegovic*) could all wait until they died: after she fell off her toilet seat, Savo's mother had stopped eating and just withered away, so Savo Tushevlyak—no hero, but a man of honor—hid his .357 magnum revolver in a milk carton, along with 300 bullets, and told the Muslim guard there was a Serb sniper lurking somewhere around, before walking on, uphill, to freedom, and the Pale.

Up in the high country opposite Leadstone (and the village of Musici, whose Muslim residents had killed off their Serb neighbors in 1941), Tushevlyak held his army-issue M72 and listened to the forest breathe, trying to set apart the sound of the coon, the stray dog, or the pack rat from the sound of murderers creeping toward us, as they did back in 1941, and 1914, and 1908, and all the way back to 1463, when 10,000 Bosnian Serb renegades converted to Islam under the walls of Jajce, having forgotten what being a man is all about.

The renegades (ancestors of Izetbegovic, Silajdzic, Ganic, and their ilk) had converted to save their lives and feudal privileges, under the watchful eyes of Sultan Mehmed II, the Conqueror, the destroyer of Constantinople, the last (until then) in the long line of Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Pechenegs, Kumans, Seljuks, Mongols, Ottomans—*Turks all*—who kept coming at us—the men of Lugh, Apollo, or Christ—like perpetual headsmen, skillful only in treachery, mayhem, and genocide.

Tushevlyak, like myself, could not stop wondering what had made the United States, NATO, and the West in general nurture the Turks—and our own, homegrown "Turks" as well—like a pack of pitbull terriers, bred to devour their owner.

And the chance will not be lacking: Tushevlyak knew that, as did his 75-year-old father, who manned our line down in Lukavica, the part of Sarajevo (along with Nedjarici, Ilidza, or Grbavica) no Western TV crew ever visited because it was suffering a worse fate than any Muslim quarter, and no Serbs could be blamed for it. A Confederate peering through the darkness toward the "internationally-held" Sarajevo airport (the Fort Sumter of a later age), like a legionary of Diocletian, or Constantine, armed with an automatic rifle, Savo Tushevlyak's father defended the Pale, next to last in the long line of defenders of the honor and the dignity of human life, made holy only by his faith in Christ, the white man who had come down upon us from God, like a newsbearer of the coming Apocalypse.

Momcilo Selic is a writer and journalist. He was imprisoned by the communist government in Yugoslavia for satirizing the cult of the leader. He was managing editor of Chronicles *from 1987-1989.*

Letter From Italy

by Marco Respinti

The Reagan Coalition

◆

Italy experienced a revolutionary election on March 27, 1994, an election in which many Italian voters could make a difference. This mood of optimism and engagement stood in stark contrast to the many elections that have left Italians so disillusioned in recent years—local administrative elections, national elections to two houses of Parliament, and even international elections for the European Parliament, to say nothing of referenda.

There are several reasons for this growing estrangement from the electoral process, but in fundamental terms, Italian society (i.e., the real country) has separated from the political class (the legal country). The case of Italy reveals the paradox of modern democracy, in which the ruling class ends up constituting a *nomenclatura* far removed from the real problems and needs of the average citizen. Voter apathy is a common problem within the West, but Italian apathy is aggravated by the knowledge that Italy has been ruled, since World War II, by the Christian Democrats (DC). Even if the DC did accomplish its mission—stopping the great communist threat in 1948—the DC has failed to give birth to a sound government based on its "Christian inspiration." On the

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contrary, the DC has smoothed the way toward national secularization and made it possible for subversive radicalism to advance at a steady pace, despite the fact that Italy is still a Christian and "conservative" nation. At the very least, the DC allowed this process to grow. It let the radicals and the communists gain part of the cultural and political power in the country, even if they never actually ruled the country (they came very close, when a coalition government between DC and the Communist Party was to be established by Giulio Andreotti and Enrico Berlinguer, in the second half of the 1970's). The DC also invited the Italian Socialist Party (PSI)—a sort of liberal and technocratic group under Bettino Craxi—to share power in the 1980's and allowed liberals and radicals to take over journals, newspapers, magazines, publishing houses, TV channels, and the academy.

When the Berlin Wall collapsed, many of the falling bricks hit the heads of Italy's rulers. The DC, no longer needed to oppose the Italian Communist Party (PCI)—which was fueled by Moscow—has been sent packing, only to be pursued by revelations of bribery and corruption through the so-called *tangentopoli* investigation. Two years of covert investigations resulted in indictments and convictions that shook the ruling parties: this is why, all of a sudden, the DC and PSI disappeared from the public scene. But not the communists, who have been clever enough to revive their public image by riding the tiger of *mani pulite*, "clean hands"—the new ideology of "public honesty." (*Mani pulite* is also the name of the judicial investigation that uncovered the "great robbery and bribery swindle," but the phrase has come to mean much more.) The former PCI became the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) and sailed through the storm of *tangentopoli*. Everyone seems to have forgotten that, thanks to *consociativism* (collaboration between the ruling party and the opposition), communists had actually joined—albeit indirectly—the Italian ruling class. So, untouched, renewed, and empowered by the November/December 1993 elections, PDS came to lead an electoral coalition called the "Progressives," a huge alliance ranging from red hard-liners to ecologists, who were able to win the mayoral elections in most towns.

Rome itself witnessed a direct confrontation between Francesco Rutelli (a "green") and Gianfranco Fini, leader of Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI), thanks to the new majoritarian electoral law. On the eve of the vote in Rome, Silvio Berlusconi entered the arena by publicly saying that if he had been in Rome, he would have voted for Fini. The declaration was greeted by a great roar in the press. Until that moment Berlusconi was a powerful private manager, owning firms, newspapers, and three TV channels. Fini was the leader of what is often dismissed as a neofascist party, and for this he has been banished from the "respectables."

The history of the MSI is too long to be told here, but one point is crucial. Since the liberal press has constantly warned against the potentially totalitarian element in Italian politics, many good-willed foreigners, out of ignorance, have been alarmed by MSI's growing popularity. As a party the MSI was too complex for easy definition; even if neofascist nostalgia was one of the elements, the party, since the 1970's, has tried to build a broad "national right-wing" alliance (the complete name of the party in fact is MSI-DN, Movimento Sociale Italiano-Destra Nazionale) of diverse elements—traditionalists, conservatives of various stripes, monarchists and so on, not all of them at home with fascism. Moreover, the "Final and Transitorial Dispositions" of the Italian Constitution made it il- legal to reorganize the fascist party under any form. The mere fact of MSI's legal existence indicated a public, albeit tacit, recognition that it was not an actual neofascist party.

Fini lost the 1993 election, and Rome still has its "green" mayor (Giulio Andreotti, who, famous for his sarcastic humor, used to say that environmentalists are just like tomatoes: as they ripen they turn from green to red). But something happened. What seemed to be a sure leftist (i.e., neocommunist) victory in the subsequent spring elections was thwarted by an outsider, Berlusconi.

In less than three months he was able to put together a party (Forza Italia) whose principal base of support comes from local civic groups opposed to the left. Working hard, Berlusconi succeeded in forging a strange coalition with his two major quarreling allies. The first is the Lega Nord (a kind of libertarian, federalist movement based mainly in Northern Italy, which *Chronicles* readers have heard about from its editor), while the second is the MSI. Better to say the former MSI, since the party has been transformed into a broader right-wing coalition, the Alleanza Nazionale (AN). Cutting all ties with any remnants of fascism, the clever Fini is putting together a sort of rightist (in the United States it would be called "conservative") party opposed to so-called Progressivism and dedicated to rebuilding the nation both morally and politically.

In March 1994, Berlusconi's coalition won the elections, defying all predictions and canceling the hopes of many big-business liberals, who were ready to jump on the neocommunists' bandwagon. Since then, the reconstructed DC (whose present name is Partito Popolare Italiano, or PPI) and the Progressives have had their ups and downs, especially the neocommunists—they held on to much of the power they already enjoyed, so that they could challenge Prime Minister Berlusconi and stall his programs. The coalition in Parliament—as Angelo Codevilla has described it, a sort of "Reagan Coalition, Italian Style," including libertarian, traditionalist, nationalist, Christian, neoconservative, and anticommunist branches, plus a small but influential number of liberal-libertines—with its nonprogressive base of voters fed up with years of leftist misrule, now calls for economic reform. As during the Reagan years in the United States, this is the result of a "quasi-hidden" silent majority. The similarity does not end here, since in Italy, as in America, the dispossessed opposition in Parliament (Congress) has stirred up a ferocious attack on the Prime Minister with the support of the liberal press.

Two observations on this comparison. The first is that the parallel itself ends here. In many respects, Italy has experienced the opposite trend to the one in the United States. America has seen the growth of a conservative popular consensus and the emergence of a more serious alliance of right-wing scholars and intellectuals. What made the Reagan and Buchanan coalitions possible was a public grounded in American tradition. Italy, at least since World War II, seems to have forgotten its roots, and its identity as a conservative Catholic country. The history of the cultural conflict with the Catholic Church is another topic that would lead us far afield, but the results are still visible today. He who misunderstands history mistakes

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present-day policy. If we fail to grapple with the *Risorgimento* (the long historical and ideological process that led to national independence and unity in the 19th century) and its aftermath—the "reconstruction" of Italian people when the heirs of the Jacobins won the war against traditional Italians—we will never build a sound "conservative" alliance to rule the country. And any reforms will be superficial.

But even if we have lost our memory, the March 1994 elections are a small sign of hope. I do not trust elections or "new governments" as such, but the dynamics of the spring vote are highly relevant. Berlusconi was able to forge a winning national party because he was clever enough to poll the attitudes throughout Italy. He actually asked people about their hopes, needs, and feelings. It was on the survey results that he built his winning agenda.

This is obviously a dangerous way to conduct politics, since it can slip into a tyranny of the masses. But the opinions have been constructive, and Italians have displayed a common sense that seems almost unbelievable in the age of television. They asked for less government, private enterprise, sound values, and they affirmed the traditional Italian principles of family and religion. This is why, nowadays, Gianfranco Fini is becoming the most popular political leader in the country (as Berlusconi himself recognizes and other allies fear), and not only in the Center and the South of the country, while Berlusconi holds his position and Bossi's Lega Nord has its own problems (an internal feud and deteriorating public opinion after Bossi's continuing attack against AN, Forza Italia, and the government of which his own party was a pillar). Fini, in fact, seems to personify exactly the agenda that Italians expressed in Berlusconi's polls, or at least he gives the impression that he is the one who can best advance it.

Berlusconi's government could have been one of the last political chances for Italy. Its enemies—the leftists—knew this, and they did everything they could to block its way. At home, the "Reagan Coalition, Italian style" had to guard itself against both a split in its coalition, as happened to the conservative alliance in the United States after Reagan, and the many George Bushes and James Bakers that could jump out of the top hat.

While Italians still fear this, a final split within the government coalition (the second threat) eventually came, thanks to Bossi. After months of attacks from the oppositions in Parliament (Rocco Buttiglione's PPI and the Progressives, led by Massimo D'Alema's PDS), combined with growing though "indirect" hostility from the judiciary—and the combative media—Berlusconi resigned on December 22.

Deprived for months of the support of his former ideologue, Gianfranco Miglio, who left the Lega and became an independent member of Parliament in support of Berlusconi's government, Bossi saw in PDS and PPI new horses to ride. For the first time in its history, there were significant protests against its leader by pro-government *leghisti* (some 30 members of Parliament led by Senator Marcello Staglieno, while Minister of the Interior Roberto Maroni, a *leghista*, seemed to play on both Bossi's and Berlusconi's sides) who wished to conserve what has been called the "Pole of Liberties and of Good Government" (Berlusconi's network of coalitions). Curiously enough, Bossi always denounced PDS as the heir of gigantic communist statism, and PPI as the heir of a corrupted and statist DC—issues later forgotten.

Note that with the new majoritarian electoral law (though imperfect, Italian style), Italians voted for a precise government and not for parties responsible for making and unmaking alliances at a later date with no respect for the will of the voters. Unable to form a new majority in Parliament and fearing the popular response (their programs being so different), the Lega, PPI, and PDS invented a "technical" government ruled by a man *super partes*, also called "government of the President" because the Prime Minister would be chosen by this institutional chief. That is a gentle way of upsetting the popular votes, thus advancing the most dangerous, clever, and seasoned of the oppositions—PDS. Berlusconi's alliance presented its call for new elections as a way to observe the rule of democracy (which I do not think is the avatar of any Absolute Spirit, but which is the system ruling Italy and thus has to be respected by people mouthing its rhetoric).

While PPI's Roberto Formigoni tried to distinguish himself from the PDS-PPI coalition (a love affair sponsored by D'Alema and Buttiglione, but highly criticized by the Italian bishops), President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, who is supposed to act as a man above the parties out of respect for the Constitution, actually played (to say the least) a more ambiguous role. Born a Christian Democrat and elected by Parliament prior to the March 27 election, the president appears to be tied to "palace politics"—a way of molding and kneading a lust for power in the old DC custom by using moderate votes to give *de facto* power to the left, regardless of the will of the voters. As the major threat, PDS applies the old political rule of *divide et impera*, dividing Berlusconi's coalition and thus completing the strategy of *solve et coagula*—making, unmaking, using, and destroying alliances (PPI and Lega) for the sake of power and ideology.

History is on the run in Italy, and every day brings something new. But regardless of what happens by the time this article is published, one thing is sure: Berlusconi's government—"The Reagan Coalition, Italian Style"—despite its mistakes and inadequacies, was salutary for this country and indicated a way of reform. It may only have been a first step in a long run, but if we turn away from this path, or something similar, the future will be grey and dangerous. Reconstruction, restoration, and counterrevolution are long and slow pro-

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cesses, not unlike subversion, deconstruction, and revolution. To turn back a 50-year tide is tantamount to going forward, for in the words of G.S. Halifax in his *Political, Moral and Miscellaneous Thoughts and Reflections*, "the best Qualification of a Prophet is to have a good Memory." We must look deeper into our national past, which we will be able to do only after resolving the present Sea of Troubles and defeating the still mounting wave of liberal progressivism.

Marco Respinti is finishing a dissertation on American conservatism at the Catholic University of Milan.

Letter From the East Village

by Mark Racho

Generation X

◆

Generation X, to which I belong, is a pious generation. You can easily become alienated from it unless you adopt the correct attitudes. Without the sociopolitical skills that today masquerade as good manners, it is quite possible to talk one's way into trouble. The last time I felt threatened by educated middle-class people was in Poland before the fall of communism. Now it can easily happen at an American university or at a dinner party.

Recently I went to a party in the East Village that set off unpleasant recollections of an experience I had on a train journey from Warsaw to Lublin in 1986. During the trip my fellow passengers, noticing that I spoke Polish with a foreign accent, had been kind to me, shared food, and struck up convivial conversation. Then I mentioned the single word "Katyn," the place where Stalin's NKVD ruthlessly murdered 5,000 Polish officers. Suddenly all fell silent. I was a Russian spy, or a member of the hated Milicja sent to test them. Or maybe I was merely ignorant.

"Stupid boy," said a neatly dressed middle-aged woman, "you don't know what you're prattling about." I received frowns, and the other passengers began to eye each other, wondering which one might be an informer. What had begun as a pleasant journey ended in almost complete silence, and anger was directed at me for spoiling the trip. I got off the train and as I walked down the platform, footsteps followed mine. A young lady who had been sitting in the corner of my compartment called after me. I stopped. She told me that it was not safe to bring up topics like Katyn in a public place. After we had talked a little and parted, I remembered that my brother had been arrested for loose talk ten years ago. He had been on holiday, too. They released him after a night.

It is farfetched to compare the atmosphere under a totalitarian communist regime with an East Village party, and yet later, after I had been thrown out of the party, the comparison seemed less and less outlandish. The party was held in the loft of a "musician" (most members of Generation X seem to be musicians, painters, or writers, although their abilities usually lie in other directions), and there was a poster of the recently deceased River Phoenix on the wall. This I took to be satirical in intent. The only person I knew there was the host, whose new girlfriend had allowed him to use the loft. The partygoers, six or seven of them, welcomed me into their cool little world. At first I managed to create a good impression by latching on to the general attitude of "we're all so genuine, so real, so caring." This care had, of course, to be balanced by a contemptuous tone about almost everything other than those "issues" that exercise the feeble moral muscles of the young. I noticed that their college educations had taught them nothing but the neatest orthodoxy, and consequently their world was one of rampant "racism," "sexism," "homophobia," and also something they liked to call "oppression." (Having heard real stories of oppression from my parents, exiled to Siberia, I found this amusing.) They loved activists, and the "community" even more. They had love in their hearts and were full of tenderness and tolerance. Their loathing (often tempered by a tone of saintly resignation to the evils of the world) was reserved for the government's conduct of foreign affairs, especially in Central America, and for the CIA.

I heard a young woman about 25 years old talking about the difficulties of dating. "I met this guy, he seemed really nice, I'd have gone out with him like a shot . . . but then I found out he was a Republican . . ." I made reference to Romeo and Juliet and *amor omnia vincit*. A young she-professor of English in her 30's, the oldest person there and therefore an authority on many things (the Brady Bunch perhaps?), told me that quoting Latin was an elitist irrelevance and continued her earnest discussion of sexism and supernumerary antitropes in Foucault. I went to help with the cooking.

So far everything was perfectly friendly and civil, and people were generally laying off politics except for an odd insult directed at Mayor Giuliani. Keeping my tongue firmly bridled so as not to make jokes or comments that would offend any group or go against any received opinion, I took refuge in absurd humor, doing impressions of famous people and acting like Robin Williams in *Mork and Mindy*. As Generation X is a TV-loving generation, this went down very well. The partygoers were beginning to like me, and in fact my goofiness was even starting to rub off some of their cool veneer. Dinner was to consist of lobster and crab, and the host and I plunged the clawing beasts into boiling water with elaborate ceremony. Someone put a live lobster under his T-shirt and acted out the famous birth scene from *Alien* to much hilarity. Somehow this led to talk of orgasms. Ah, this was my generation indeed. Nothing was too vulgar; shameless sexual talk and double entendres flew; we were free, tolerant, and hip.

We sat down to eat, and I listened to the conversations around me. A tone of "caring" and piety indicated which ones were becoming serious. Just as earlier generations have been sickened by the smug hypocrisy inherent in certain words and phrases used by their elders—"duty" and "*pro patria mori*" during World War I, for instance—so I find myself nauseated by the buzzwords of my own generation. We cant about "issues" and "inclusion" in the same glib tone that the baby-boomers used when talking about "openness" and "revolution." Generation X knows itself to be right. That righteousness can be summed by observing the differences in ancient and modern pop music. In the 60's, the Rolling Stones roared out "Brown Sugar" with its "Gold Coast slaver bound

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for cotton fields" and black girls that "taste so good." Now an appalling group calling itself "They Might Be Giants," popular with the snidely pious college crowd, whines about "Your Racist Friend."

Across the table from me I heard the culmination of a discussion about AIDS. I knew what was coming. I had heard it before. After some preparatory commiinations on the danger of the "Christian right" opposing condom distribution in schools, there came the inevitable climax about the evil Reagan-Bush legacy. Because I had grown bored with fooling around, bored with keeping my thoughts to myself, I did the same thing I had done in Poland a few years ago: I indulged in loose talk. I should have known better. After all, I was no longer a schoolboy, I was an adult talking with my peers. I should have remembered that most members of my generation who attended college had been taught not to argue or discuss and to question only common sense. So when I suggested that the Church, in all its doctrines and pronouncements, had never once encouraged the behavior that spreads AIDS, rather the opposite in fact, and that I had never heard either President Reagan or President Bush speak in favor of fisting, sodomy, multiple partners, or injecting oneself with various drugs, I should not have been surprised when my remark was greeted with a horrified silence.

Then the interrogation began. From all sides of the table, people who had so far been friendly started to get seriously upset. "How can you say that?" "What do you mean?" "Is he some kind of fascist?" Someone called me a "homophobe." Another person asked me with the kind of passionate intensity one sometimes sees on *Melrose Place* whether I knew anyone with AIDS. I countered by asking whether he knew anyone with cystic fibrosis. (I have known three, all dead now.) A young woman with tight lips and a shaven head proceeded to burst into crocodile tears. I half expected the female "musician" to start a rendition of "Your Homophobic Friend." An attempt was made to "get through to me" as if I were a dubious heretic during the Reformation. It was explained that the health care policies under Reagan-Bush had caused the spread of the disease, but I would have none of it. The only mistake the government made, I said, was to cave in to the homosexual agenda and allow the disease to become politicized. If it had been treated like any other epidemic, then perhaps fewer people would have succumbed to it. "Blame the victim!" screamed one guest. "I can't eat," wailed another, "I feel sick."

I defended my position stoutly, using all the resources of logic that an old-fashioned education provides, but to no avail. These were not ideas that could be allowed. I tried to talk reasonably, calmly. I explained that I was not callous about the fate of those who were sick, but that I could not watch their sickness being used for political purposes. The tone of the discussion began to turn ominous. Finally one of the women, eyeing her boyfriend, a large-bodied "new man" with a beard, asked me in an unctuously moral tone whether I liked to fight. I had not come to this party intending to get into any physical confrontations. The English professor hinted that it was time for me to leave. The call became a chorus, and naturally I abandoned ship.

As I walked down the corridor, my head spinning, I heard footsteps behind me and immediately flashed back to the train station in Poland. The host came up and remonstrated gently with me. "Come on, dude, you know you can't say stuff like that . . ." We talked a little and parted. I remembered an English friend who had been censured by university authorities for challenging a failing grade he had received while studying in America. One of the questions in the compulsory course was: "Homosexuality is equal to heterosexuality as a viable lifestyle. True or False?" He had gotten the answer wrong.

Mark Racho is a writer living in New York City.

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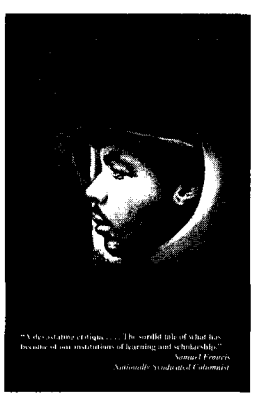

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WAR

Russia's Chechen Crisis

by Wayne Allensworth

Russia's ill-fated decision to intervene in the Chechen civil war has precipitated a political crisis at least as heated, and far more bloody, than the 1993 presidential-parliamentary showdown. Consider the following: all the major "democratic" parties, including former prime minister and Yeltsin backer Yegor Gaidar's "Russia's Choice," have denounced the intervention and called for a halt to military operations, leaving only Vladimir Zhirinovsky and a few other ultranationalists backing the action; Grigory Yavlinsky, a leading pro-radical reform parliament deputy, has called for President Boris Yeltsin's resignation; Yeltsin's own human rights commissioner, Sergei Kovalyov, who spent three weeks in the besieged Chechen capital of Grozny, has bitterly denounced the intervention, citing the "huge number of civilian casualties—helpless invalids, elderly people, women—most of them ethnic Russians who had no place to go," thus undermining official claims of concern over civilian deaths as well as concern about the region's Russian population; a number of Russian general staff officers have denounced the intervention, and Russian news media accounts indicate growing dissension in the ranks of the ragged and infrequently paid army (a group of enlisted men bitterly told a Russian reporter of having had their first decent meal in some time while being held prisoner by the Chechens); the State Duma's communist faction is agitating for early presidential elections (previously scheduled for 1996), as deputies prepare for an extended emergency session; as of early January, 40,000 Russian troops have been committed to the assault on Grozny, and the high-spirited Chechen irregulars are fighting on, prompting comparisons with the disastrous Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The Russian government felt it had sufficient grounds for intervention, and reason to expect popular support. After all, Chechen strongman Dzhokhar Dudayev, a former Soviet air force general, had seized power in Grozny by coup in 1991, taking advantage of the chaos following the failure of the August anti-Gorbachev putsch. He then had himself elected President in a disputed election; his popular support has steadily declined ever since. He was in dire straits last November, with insurgent anti-Dudayev forces already closing the ring around the capital. Dudayev is widely believed to be connected to (if not the godfather of) the notorious Chechen mafia, gangsters who are feared throughout the former Soviet Union, and has threatened Moscow on many occasions with a wave of terrorist attacks if the Russian authorities attempted to interfere. The Chechen coup set a dangerous example in the eyes of the Russians, with the specter of warlordism threatening the stability of the Russian federation. Chechnya is still, at least technically, Russian territory, and the civil war there threatens to spill over into volatile adjacent territories. The possibility of a wider war in the Russian Caucasus is real enough.

The story of what went wrong is twofold. First, the Russian public might have supported a quick application of massive force followed by an early withdrawal, but the ill-conceived and tentative intervention (which Russian officials initially denied) quickly bogged down as casualties, both military and civilian, mounted. The specter of another futile, drawn-out conflict, à la Afghanistan, has weighed heavily on the minds of the Russian public. Second, the presence of Russian troops in Chechnya, as well as the clumsy and brutal application of Russian air power, has rallied Chechens to the defense of their homeland.

The Chechens are one of the many mountain peoples of the Caucasus who were conquered by the czar's armies in a series of bloody 19th-century campaigns. Muslims whose native language is Turkic in origin, they earned a reputation for tenacity, ferocity, and stubborn courage in their hard-fought war against Russian domination. The Chechens' traditional way of life is clan-based, and the bold feud was long a feature of their hard-scrabble lives. The threat of the outlander was the cement that bound the Chechen clans into a nation, and Stalin's deportation of that tiny nation of less than a million souls in the 1940's (about a third of their number died) burned distrust of Moscow into the national consciousness. In spite of (or maybe because of) the old imperial policy of Russification (many Chechens speak Russian as their first language today) and Stalin's deportation of the entire nation (the survivors were allowed to return following the tyrant's death), as well as the Soviet policy of religious repression, the Chechen identity asserted itself with a vengeance once the fight with the foreign invaders began. Chechens who may have had no sympathy for Dudayev are now rushing to the defense of Grozny and national autonomy. People who may have never openly practiced their religion are now shouting "*Allah akbar*!" ("God is great!") in the rubble of the Chechen capital. Even the leaders of the anti-Dudayev coalition that had led the fight against him earlier (and had accepted Moscow's aid, hoping, apparently, for autonomy within the Russian federation following Dudayev's ouster), warned the Russians not to intervene directly in the conflict. Theirs was a fight between kinsmen and fellow Muslims, and the Chechen people, anti-Dudayev or not, so the Russians were told, would not welcome the direct interference of outsiders in their clan feuds. The warnings went unheeded.

What may come as a result of the Kremlin's miscalculation is anybody's guess. What does seem clear, though, is that the Chechen crisis should instruct our own denationalized American elites, who preach the gospel of the New World Order, open borders, and multiculturalism, on the power and resilience of particularist identities. We may call it nationalism, tribalism, clannishness, or what have you, but it is an essential and natural ingredient of human community. Moreover, if the Russians and Soviets were unable forcibly to assimilate the

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Chechens, who at their peak could barely populate an American city, while using the sternest possible measures over a period of roughly a century and a half, perhaps we should rethink the notion that a few Big Macs, a pair of Nike sneakers, and some Madonna CDs, together with enough English to make one's way through K-Mart, are enough to convert untold millions of Mexicans, Chinese, and Nigerians, among others, into Americans. The Los Angeles riots and the behavior of certain Latino organizations during the Proposition 187 campaign should serve as a reminder to us of what any village idiot knows: when the crunch comes, blood calls to blood and people line up with their own kind against outsiders.

Wayne Allensworth is an information officer at the Foreign Broadcast Information Service in Washington, D.C. The views expressed are his alone.

Crooning Over Chechnya

by Eugene Narrett

Leonard Bernstein was a fine mid-century American composer and conductor. He also achieved notoriety as one of the postwar period's first and most visible celebrants of extreme left-wing attitudes. Bernstein's garden parties for the Black Panthers in their baddest days evoked the phrase *radical chic*, which entered our language as an early marker of what since has become known as lifestyle liberalism.

Rebellion in the Russian province of Chechnya recently has elbowed aside Bosnia as the foreign segment of our media diet, and it is this rebellion that has provided the latest occasion for radical chic. In fairness, it is not only lifestyle liberals who are engrossed with the Chechen. Republican internationalists nostalgic for the Cold War have taken an interest in Russia's stumbling response. Bob Dole, who has been lurching into one hollow "statesmanlike" posture after another as preamble to his doomed presidential bid, has muttered darkly about resurgent Russian imperialism. This grumbling is familiar and thoroughly bogus. Those who danced with Brezhnev cannot plausibly claim distress about the suppression of a tiny province of Muslim fundamentalists.

But it is precisely the Chechens' exotic ethnicity that liberals find so thrilling. Brezhnev's crushing of the Czech spring in 1968 may have discomfited them a bit, but in the midst of the Vietnam War they did not want to criticize the Russians overmuch. Besides, the Czechs were so boringly *Western*, part of our culture for 2,000 years. How could liberals with hearts aflame for the Vietcong glamorize white people who love Mozart and the Catholic Church?

The Chechens are a different matter, just the kind of dashing hoodlums that liberals find attractive, at a distance. Consider some of the breathless commentary from a newly minted "expert" in the Northeast's most liberal paper. Our freelancer recalls the glamorous Imam Shamil, "a holy Muslim warrior" who proclaimed a *jihad* against the troops of the czar. "His horsemen were unequaled!" enthuses the cub reporter quoting from her Worldbook. "Navigating the high terrain like mountain goats"—what an inventive simile—"they swooped down with reins between their teeth and hacked the Russian soldiers to pieces as they struggled up the narrow mountain passes." How exciting to envision the slaughter of a bunch of incompetent Christian white boys, scions of men who for 500 years fought to protect themselves, and people further west, from the onslaught of Tartars and Mongols.

But politically correct attitudes are nothing new to bored middle-class attitudinizers. "Shamil was a heroic figure in European capitals. Victorian ladies embroidered his black banner in needlepoint." So radical chic was alive and festering in 19th-century England. It was just that mixture of aesthetic and imperial attitudes that led some English to glorify and assist the Confederate states during our own Civil War.

There is more in this matter that reflects the liberal habit of loving abroad what they hate at home. Listen to the pack: "Violence and carrying weapons is a Chechen way of life. In the Caucasus, warriors wrote poems to their daggers." Even better, "blood feuds and vendettas still exist." Those infatuated with this portrait of violent, gun-toting natives are the same liberals who demonize the National Rifle Association and any American who seeks to retain his right to a rifle. Such double standards are a signature of radical chic and the reason normal folks resent it.

Last but not least are careerist reasons for idealizing the Chechens. If there is a protracted battle with many deaths, there will be a lot to write about, many picturesque and horrid scenes to be described with piquant sympathy for the Third World rebels. "Already volunteers are signing up for a holy war," our cub writes with an almost lubricious fervor. Chechen brutality and fanaticism will dissolve into visions of turbaned horsemen writing poems to their daggers and jigging in the village square.

Our own national interests will become obscured as well. While the Russian army flounders as it did during World War I, and Yeltsin's control of his country fractures as did the czar's, a coup becomes dangerously possible. Our goal must be stability in Russian governance, with or without Boris Yeltsin. If we will not go to the mat for the Czech Republic or Poland with their integral links to Western culture, we must not pick fights for Chechnya, a province the size of Massachusetts and a republic only in name.

With our limited political influence and energy and our need to reform our own government and cultural values, one can only hope that the odd alliance of Cold War reflexes and radical chic will not obscure our main interests concerning Chechnya. There as elsewhere, we need statesmen who can distinguish travelogs from history and who decline to satisfy the transient fascinations of our jaded elite.

Eugene Narrett is a professor of English at Framingham State College and a columnist for the Middlesex News.

ECONOMICS

The Flat Tax

by R. Cort Kirkwood

When the new guru of the Grand Old Party waddled up to the Speaker's chair and took his oath, the clock began ticking. The GOP had 100 days to fulfill a good measure of its "Contract with America." Since House

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Speaker Gingrich has been planning his takeover of Congress for more than two decades, just about all the country's problems should have been rectified by now. Alas, the 100 days are nearly past as we go to press and tax day is almost here, but the much-vaunted contract has done nothing to alleviate the income tax burden on the average American (although Gingrich and company are fiddling with the capital gains tax for their country club buddies). If the GOP is smart, by next tax day it will have forgotten about capital gains and jammed House Majority Leader Dick Armey's proposal for a flat tax on income down President Clinton's throat.

The income tax is a bad tax, but Armey's proposal is a winner on several fronts. First of all, like other flat tax proposals, it simplifies the tax code enough that you can file a return on a postcard. The new tax rate would be 17 percent. A single man or woman could claim a personal exemption of $13,100, while a married couple filing jointly could claim $26,200. Each dependent is worth a $5,300 deduction, but other deductions would not be permitted. A family of four with an income of $50,000 would pay taxes on $13,200, or $2,244. A family of four with an income of $34,000 would pay no income tax at all. The rate of 17 percent would also apply to businesses, which would subtract revenues from expenses and pay a tax on the difference.

What's more, Armey's legislation, called the Freedom and Fairness Restoration Act, recognizes the fiction of "unearned" (meaning investment) income and would, as Gingrich's contract promises, eliminate the tax on capital gains, an outlandishly unfair tax on investors. As things stand now, an investor can be clobbered three times by the IRS on one simple investment. Playing the stock market, for instance, means paying a tax on the wages used to purchase shares. Then the company pays a corporate income tax, a cost borne by the company's owners, the shareholders. Lastly, the shareholder pays a capital gains tax on dividends from his investment.

Yet there is more to Armey's proposal than the burden it lifts from a taxpayer's shoulders. It ends withholding and requires Americans to write a monthly check to the Internal Revenue Service, a measure that would open taxpayers' eyes to the real cost of government. Withholding helps hide that cost. Moreover, Armey would cap federal spending and require the Congressional Budget Office to calculate the risk to public health and safety and cost of complying with new federal regulations.

Of course, the measure has its opponents, many of whom march behind the chariot of Citizens for Tax Justice. This group, which receives 99 percent of its funds from the AFL-CIO, breathlessly claimed that Armey's proposal would balloon the federal deficit by a minimum of $132 billion a year, which, if true, would certainly doom the proposal among liberal Democrats who might otherwise grudgingly support it. It turned out that CTJ tried pulling a fast one with some of Armey's data. In fact, the proposal would increase the deficit only $40 billion, which as Armey says is a problem easily remedied with a few minor spending cuts. Professor Armey did not spare the Clinton administration's goofy analysis a failing grade either. When the Einsteins in Clinton's Treasury Department published their critique, Armey, an economics professor by trade, found a $500 billion error. Of course, Clinton's myrmidons still say the proposal is not "revenue neutral," which is true provided no steps are taken to cut federal spending severely. But that is socialist math for you.

Armey's supporters abound. The most important are the hundreds of Americans who wrote to him after he published a piece about his proposal in the *Wall Street Journal*. They like it because they have become galley slaves chained to the federal government's sinking ship. Working Americans spend 5.4 billion hours wondering how much they owe the government and worrying about an audit. Even worse, the average family now pays more in taxes than it spends on itself. Americans work from New Year's Day past Independence Day to support government. As one man from New Jersey put it, "I am a senior citizen (WWII) who the President said when we were young we saved the world. I didn't save it for the IRS."

That is reason enough to back the proposal, but here are two more. Lawyers and accountants, who get rich translating the tax code for the untutored, get the shaft. "It's hardly an accident," business writer Robert Deitz says, "that over the past several years law and accounting firms' revenues nationwide have almost doubled, at the same time the gross national product has grown by only about one-fifth that increase." Interpreting the tax code, of course, means exploiting deductions that are really a form of social control. As Armey says, "through a bewildering array of deductions, exemptions and credits, the politicians who wrote the code tell us . . . that investing in a municipal sewer system is better than investing in the next Microsoft. . . . A government does not have the right to use the tax system to massively influence the economic decisions of its citizens."

Common sense like that gave the GOP its majority in both houses. This begs the question of whether the Stupid Party will answer opportunity, which is banging down the front door, or roll over in bed and pull the covers over its head. Unhappily, a spokesman for Armey says the flat tax proposal will not land at the Ways and Means Committee until August, which means it does not stand a chance of coming to a vote anytime soon.

That is too bad, because Armey's plan is faithful to the contract and benefits the little guys who earn less than $50,000 and do not have enough to invest to make a reduction in the capital gains tax an immediate, tangible benefit. They care less about what they will pay when they sell a house five years hence than about what they pay in taxes every week.

Guru Gingrich can prattle on about MegaTrends, Alvin Toffler, and capital gains all he wants. He can force Congress to obey federal laws because the rest of us do and never ask why the federal government should pass them or anyone should obey them in the first place. But all the fast talking and window dressing on Capitol Hill will not amount to a hill of beans if Americans do not get a break on the fee they pay for their franchise. Otherwise, they may tell the new pachyderm potentate and his bush beaters in the Stupid Party to pack their trunks and leave town.

R. Cort Kirkwood is managing editor of the Arlington Courier *and* McLean Providence Journal, *weekly newspapers in Virginia, published by Dear Communications.*

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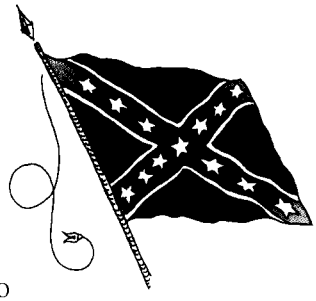

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National Lawyers Association

by Mario Mandina

Three years ago, the American Bar Association voted to abandon its neutral position on legalized abortion and to endorse *Roe* v. *Wade*. In response to this action, some 14,000 members of the ABA resigned in protest. Many attorneys felt it was impossible for them to remain a member of, let alone contribute money to, an organization that now embraced abortion on demand as a constitutional right. It was in this climate that a group of six attorneys met in St. Louis on October 23, 1993, to form an organization called National Lawyers for Life. The six founding lawyers (myself included) were all officers or members of state pro-life groups, and our initial goal was merely to coordinate activities with other pro-life groups. But the overwhelming support we received from attorneys across the country—who were fed up with the ABA not only on the issue of abortion, but on more practical matters, including services provided, the high price of membership, and the future direction of the ABA—convinced us that the time was indeed ripe for the formation of a full-blown alternative to the ABA, which we decided to call the National Lawyers Association (NLA).

Currently, the NLA has some 700 members in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and has mass mailings in the works designed to tap into the 90,000 attorneys nationwide who are potential members of this new organization. The NLA remains unequivocally pro-life and hopes to dispel the image that "abortion on demand" is acceptable to the legal profession as a whole. More information about the NLA, and about its first national convention scheduled for October, to be held in St. Louis, can be obtained by calling me at 800-471-2994 (Fax: 816-471-2995).

Mario Mandina is president of the NLA in Kansas City, Missouri.

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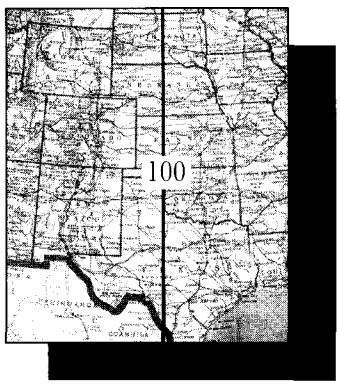
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Land of Oil and Water

A sign above the cafe adjacent to the motel across the highway from the railroad tracks in Lordsburg, New Mexico, proclaimed the good news in faded red letters on a flaking white background. "Whiskey and water," I told the waitress when she came with her pencil and pad. "No bar," she explained. "But there's a sign." "The bar is *cerrito*." She brought a Tecate and a water glass rimmed with salt, and I tried her again. "I'll have the filet *tampiqueño*, medium rare." "Sorry. No *tampiqueño* left for to-*niiight* please." "Then I want liver and onions with hash browns." "No liver a-*gaiiin* tonight sorry." So I ordered chicken fried steak and ate while a group of old people were taken from a senior citizens' bus and fed fried chicken and mashed potatoes with gravy, peas from a can, and Jell-O. Southern New Mexico—where even sane people and grownups see UFOs and rumors of space aliens are common, bicyclists vanish from lonely stretches of road into thin air, and weird anomalies present themselves unexpectedly in the vast deserts—has a surreal quality that is more palpable still in the area of the Mexican border which exists as a kind of no-man's land where the various human elements seem never to merge; to achieve a common form, identity, or understanding.

Around Animas the desert gave way to a yellow grassy plain on which the Animas Mountains appeared to float like bergs of black ice beneath a platinum sky; elephantine cottonwoods already in bud along the winding creek formed a pointillistic screen between the greening bottom and the tin roofs of ranch houses glinting in the indirect light. Before an experienced friend warned against it, I had planned to drive from Juárez across the Continental Divide where it follows the Sierra Occidental whose stony peaks pointed above the southern horizon. Much of the marijuana grown in Mexico comes from the Sierra Madre; a gringo passing through the region, if he is not shot by the growers, has a good chance of being murdered by smugglers, or by the *federales*. At the foot of a pass in the Pelloncillo



Mountains from which Colonel Cooke and his Mormon Brigade in the Mexican-American War lowered their wagons by ropes, a Border Patrol officer sat in a green Ford Bronco monitoring his service radio. "Have you caught any aliens running around up here today?" "It's too high and rugged for them. But in Douglas we're overrun by aliens, and smugglers. Our force has been increased recently from 30 to 60 agents, but we figure that's going to be the ceiling." "And you still could do with twice that many men." The officer grinned. "Yes."

Douglas, Arizona, was founded in 1901 by a party that included the family of Justice William O. Douglas, and developed from an economic base of cattle-ranching, cotton-growing, and copper-smelting. Since the 1970's when the Justice's environmentalist allies got the smelters closed down, the population of Douglas had dropped from approximately 30 to 10 thousand people, while that of Agua Prieta, its sister city across the border, swelled to one hundred thousand, many of them waiting to sneak into the United States under cover of the pall of smoke rising from the city's perpetually smoldering garbage dumps. I took a room at the Travel Lodge where, in an atmosphere pungent with curry, I had difficulty making myself understood by the manager, a native of New Delhi. The Chinese restaurant adjoining the tavern where I went for a drink displayed a crucifix together with a hanging of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the wall. At La Fiesta Cafe on 8th Street they served an excellent *menudo*—soup made with hominy and tripe—and steak *tampiqueño*. The patrons were mostly well-to-do Mexican ranchers and their wives: beautiful women of the pure Spanish type wearing tailored slacks and silk blouses ornamented discreetly with silver. The waitress failed to understand when I ordered scotch-and-soda, then brought a water-glass brimful of raw scotch in which two minuscule ice cubes floated.

I was awakened the next morning by roosters crowing and a man in the repair shop behind the motel hammering out auto bodies. On the sidewalk in front of the Gadsden Hotel where I went for breakfast an old man stopped me to inquire as to what part of Wyoming I was from, having recognized the broncbuster license plates. A saddle stiff with two canes, he said he had cowboyed in Wyoming, Utah, Montana, and Idaho, and mentioned in particular a ranching outfit near Douglas, Wyoming. "Not the Cannon Land and Livestock Company?" He nodded vigorously. "No, but I'm acquainted with them folks." The skylighted lobby of the Gadsden Hotel with its grand staircase descending between marble columns had been filmed for ten or fifteen movies, one of the more recent featuring Paul Newman, and Pancho Villa once ate a meal in the hotel's dining room. I went into the coffee shop and sat at the counter beside a small brown man in his 70's: spare, weathered, his silver hair touched with Latin black. As I drank strong coffee he leaned to me in the unabashed self-presenting manner Anglos find disconcerting and said confidentially in a heavily accented voice, "We ought to have a Gringo Day around here—eh? Sunday is the only day of the week when they aren't all over here on our side of the border." His family, the old man told me proudly, had been in the United States for five generations, and his father arrived in the Douglas area in 1898. He himself was part Irish, part Scot, part English. He spoke a few incomprehensible words, paused for the reaction, and asked, "You don't understand? That's Gaelic. You're a Scot, I can tell by looking at you. You ought to know Gaelic."

A hard wind driving out of Mexico like an invisible broom pushed waves of trash across the chain-link fence on the international border. A pickup truck with Sonora plates, pieced together from the body parts of differently colored

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junkyard hulks, passed noisily in the northbound lane, and a carefully parked sedan burned quietly by itself at the curb along the main thoroughfare. In Agua Prieta young men with vacant faces leaned on iron lamp posts rising from narrow sidewalks built on high stepped curbs above drains clogged by garbage. Eighteen years ago three members of a Douglas ranching family named Hanigan, the father and two sons, were charged with the kidnapping and torture of three *mojados* who had ventured across the border in search of work. Public feeling in Douglas was strong for the Hanigans, while in Agua Prieta citizens organized a boycott of the Douglas merchants. After the Hanigans were acquitted on all counts in Cochise County Court, Anglos were afraid to show their faces in the Mexican city. "Where are you from?" the United States Customs man asked. "What do you do up there? Are you a rancher?" He waved on two old women and a family crowding behind, all of them waving their MICA cards. When they had passed through the inspector, speaking deliberately and in a formal voice, said, "The problem is that they breed beyond the capacity to support themselves. Demographics are going to sink us all. I like these people okay, but they're not my people. This is a war going on down here, and there's going to be a white backlash in a few years. —Yes, yes: go on through. . . . See that old lady?" He pointed to a toothless crone carrying a shopping bag on each arm. "She's probably responsible for 30 grandchildren. I'm 40 years old, grew up in Southern California where there were hardly any Hispanics at all. Now the place is overrun with them. And it makes me furious: I resent that I should be responsible for all these people. These small-town peasants have no education, no general knowledge, no English. And they don't assimilate. They can't support a wife and six kids on seasonal agricultural work; I don't know what they're thinking about. They say the Catholic Church has got them by the neck; I suppose they do."

Dating from 1880, Bisbee is a monument to the times when Americans knew how to lay out a town and build buildings having dignity, solidity, and also to the heedless destructiveness of those times; the livid pit from which generations of Bisbeeans extracted ore for the smelters of Douglas remains an open wound in the surrounding desert hills. A lead story in the *Bisbee Observer* concerned a Ms. Alexis Claire—a local travel agent arrested for allegedly harassing a Border Patrol agent as he was attempting to interrogate a Central American client who wished to purchase a Greyhound Bus ticket. Missing from the reporter's account was an explanation of how Ms. Claire's face, pictured in the paper, had failed to turn the offending man to limestone. I drove past her travel office and the huge peace symbol formed from a map of the world hanging behind the plate glass window, and on to Naco: a hamlet located a few miles west of Bisbee on the international border where vigilantes from Tucson used to take shots at illegals crossing into the United States. The outskirts of town were festooned with trash, the shoulders of the highway littered with burst bags of garbage tossed from passing cars for the wind and the starving dogs to tear apart. On Main Street all the commercial buildings except for a couple of bars were closed, and the only people in the street were a group of Mexican boys who, after clearing themselves with United States Customs and Immigration, pushed their jalopy through the port of entry onto American soil and stood grinning and waving to their friends in Mexico as if crossing the border were entertainment for them, or some sort of joke.

In the desert north of Bisbee I stopped for an old woman in a black raincoat who stood beside the road holding a can of beer. "I'm going to Tucson," she said through the window. "I'm going to Nogales. I can take you as far as Tombstone." The woman's face was a bleary ruin, her stringy white hair streaked obscenely with yellow. "Thank you," she said, drinking beer. "Are you a real cowboy?" "No." "I have to go to jail," she explained, "for six months." "I'm sorry to hear it." I let her out at the junction and went to have a look at what remains of the OK Corral. "Well, that's Tombstone." "Yeah. Now, where's the cemetery?" Where a century before gunfighters blazed away at one another, potbellied old men from Rockford, Illinois, shuffled about like Weeble-Wobbles, lifting their cameras off their paunches to take slow aim. While the Mexicans arriving in Arizona come to work and to breed, the Americans are here to play for a few more years, and die.

South a mile of the displaced Mexican village of Sasabe a brick building on the American side of the border faced a shack with the flag of the Republic of Mexico drooping above it on a pole. The steel gate at the crossing had been torn away, only a fragment left hanging from one of the posts. Three United States Customs officials as I drove up stood glassing the Altar Valley to the north. "What's going on in Sasabe?" I asked. They grinned. "What you see is what there is," one of the inspectors said, making a wide gesture that encompassed a few hundred square miles of desert. He pointed to the ruined gate. "We had a smuggler through here two weeks ago, he was being pursued by the Border Patrol. When he reached the crossing he ducked his head and hit that gate doing 70 miles an hour—took it clean off, along with the chain and padlock, and he was going so fast he did hardly any damage to the car. What we were doing when you got here was watching a red car, followed by a pickup truck, driving out in the mesquite there. Most of the trouble goes around us here: the smugglers have their own road system allowing them to cross the border without having to come through the Port of Entry. All this valley from the border north 20 miles used to be a single ranch until the owner sold out, and now the lower part here is a bird sanctuary. We've got all these nice old folks down from Tucson, wandering around with their cameras and binoculars, taking pictures and looking at the birds, and all the time rubbing shoulders with smugglers and desperadoes and never knowing it. It looks to me like the car and van are harmless, though. You say you're from Wyoming? I know a guy up in Wyoming. Name's Bob Skinner." "I know Bob and his brothers, too: outfitters out of Pinedale. And I know the man who used to own this valley. He bought a spread near Cora, north of Pinedale." "It's a small world," the inspector agreed.

He stared away as he spoke at the bird sanctuary. The red car and the truck had disappeared and in the vast stillness of the desert nothing could be seen to stir beneath the savage brow of Baboquivari Peak, legendary home of the Papago deity I'itoi. "In a couple of hours now," the inspector said, "we'll be able to see their headlights out there, 20 miles away, and there won't be a thing we can do about it. The War on Drugs is all in the politicians' mouths." ©

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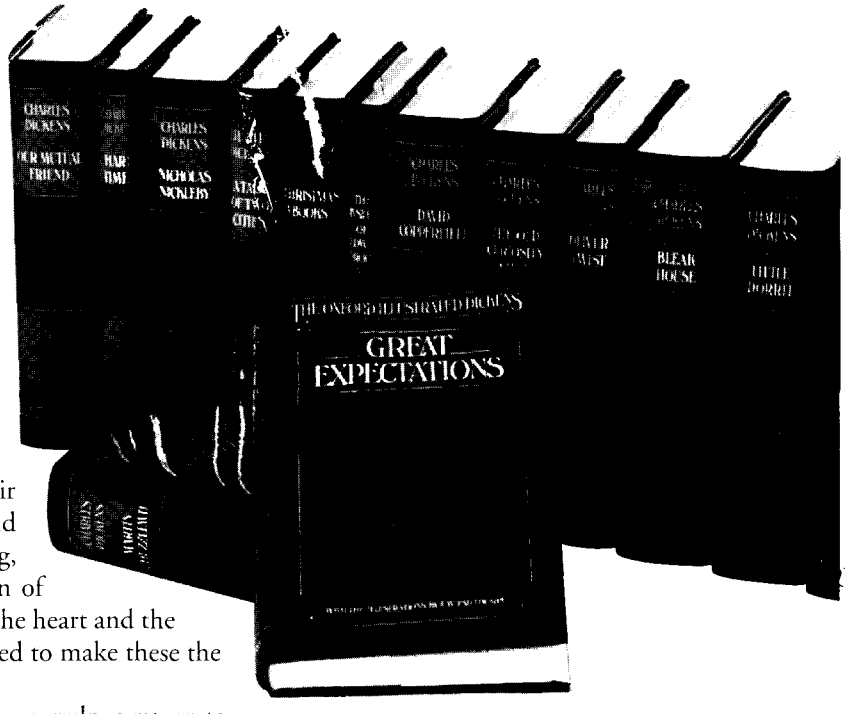

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